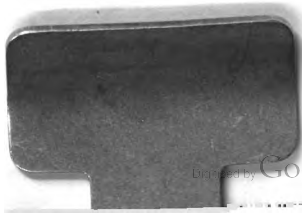

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FARDOROUGH

THE MÏSER;

OR, THE

CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA.

BY

WILLIAM CARLETON,

Author of "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," "Valentine M'Clutchy,"

"The Broken Pledge," "Rody the Rover," "Paddy Go Easy,"

&c., &c., &c.

FOURTH EDITION, CAREFULLY REVISED AND CORRECTED.

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TO
JAMES M'CULLAGH, ESQ.,

F. T. C. D., M. R. I. A.,

And Professor of Mathematics in the University of Dublin.

MY DEAR M'CULLAGH,

It is with the sincerest satisfaction that I avail myself of the present opportunity, and I only wish the occasion were more important, of inscribing to you this Volume of the "CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA." Indeed I feel great pride in doing so; and this for many reasons. In the first place, your name is one which confers honour not only on your own country, but on science itself, as well as on the University of which you are such an illustrious ornament; add to this, the gratification I feel in your friendship, to me so warm and disinterested. These motives alone would be sufficient to induce me to place a name so eminent in the front of my book. But when I inform my readers that you and I are natives of the same county, (Tyrone)

it will be at once admitted that there is something peculiarly fit and appropriate in dedicating this Volume to you, rather than to any one else. Apart, however, from other considerations, it is no common honour to have associated with a production so humble as this, the name of the first science scholar and profoundest mathematician that our country has ever produced—the name of a man whose unobtrusive character and modesty are equal to his great and extensive genius.

Believe me to be,

MY DEAR M'CULLAGH,

Most affectionately and faithfully yours,

W. CARLETON.

P R E F A C E .

IN consequence of the very favourable reception which the tale of FARDOROUGHIA THE MISER, met with in the pages of our admirable Irish Periodical, the Dublin University Magazine, I have been induced to submit it in a separate and collected form to a still wider circle of readers. This was rendered the more necessary, as much of the force and connection of the story was lost in consequence of its not having appeared with regularity in the consecutive numbers of the Periodical I have mentioned.

Most of the *dramatis personæ* of the story are, in point of fact, drawn from life; the chief character in it, that of the Miser himself, is one to which I have never met any thing similar in books, yet I beg to assure the reader, that I have known and witnessed in real life most of the struggles between avarice and

affection which I have attempted to depict in the narrative. I knew the original well ; and many readers in the county of Louth will at once recognize the little withered old man, who always wore his great coat (cothamore) about his shoulders, and kept perpetually sucking in his cheeks while engaged in conversation. It is also true that he was nearly fourteen years married before he became a father; his wife having borne him but one son, the only issue they ever had.

It is indeed surprising to think how easy a thing it is to give to truth the appearance and impress of fiction. The Miser's conduct at the residence of the County Treasurer, who absconded with his money, is so well remembered, that it is now believed by the people that the descendants of that public delinquent have never prospered since, in consequence of his curses. This will be the more easily understood by my readers, when they are informed, that it is the opinion of the lower Irish that a curse, when once uttered, must fall either upon the object of its malignity, or upon *something else*; and that it will hover seven years in the air, rather than fail in accomplishing some evil purpose analagous to that of him who uttered it—that is, when it cannot fulfil his intention

upon the person against whom it was originally directed.

With respect to his wife, I have only to say that, by those who know as I do the qualities which prevail among the humble females of my country, her character will immediately be recognised as one which they have frequently witnessed. Honor O'Donovan is no creature of the imagination, but, on the contrary, a likeness, faithful and true to the virtues of thousands, whose glowing piety, meek endurance, and unexampled fortitude have risen triumphant over some of the severest trials of domestic life. Dear to my heart is the memory of the beloved being whose virtues are but faintly shadowed forth in the portrait of her which I have drawn. Oh, many a portrait of equal piety and purity is to be found under the humble roof of the Irish cottage and the Irish farm-house; for in no country on the earth, or among no class of females, could the eye of an observer discover greater truth, sincerer religion, or firmer principle, or tenderer affection, than among the wives and daughters of the Irish peasantry. We have indeed a right to be proud of our countrywomen; and ungenerous must the heart of any Irish writer be, who will neglect to record virtues that are so worthy of imitation.

It is now some time since I have been before the public, and I consequently feel much anxiety as to the reception I may experience at its hands. I cannot forget, however, that it has hitherto treated me with great kindness; and I earnestly hope that it will continue to manifest the same indulgence to one, whose greatest happiness has been that his humble efforts were deemed worthy of its good opinion.

DUBLIN, *June*, 1839.

PREFACE

TO

THE FOURTH EDITION.

I AM called upon here for scarcely any thing in the shape of observation, unless it be the pleasing duty to say how much and sincerely I thank the Public for the continued popularity which the present work has experienced at its hands. Its success has been a sufficient proof that there exists a taste for healthy national literature in our own land—a taste that will every day contribute to develope native genius, and enable Ireland to hold that place, as an intellectual nation, to which she not only now is, but has long been entitled, when we consider the brilliant array of names that belong to her.

Little, however, as I have to say here, I cannot close without expressing my gratification at the hopeful growth of the national mind, which we have witnessed within the last few years. Such a fact, comprising, as

it does, all the expanding phases of intellectual greatness, promises more for the ultimate prosperity and independence of our glorious country, than all other causes and exertions put together.—In vain may men work for political objects; in vain may they propose plans for national aggrandizement: I assert, that so long as the mind and genius of a country are suffered to lie dead or torpid, and so long as education, in its best sense, combining moral, religious, and scientific knowledge,—that knowledge which teaches man to think as becomes his high destiny, and to act up to all his enlightened duties,—so long, I say, as this generic principle is neglected in any country, so long will that country be poor, divided, and unhappy. I believe there is no instance of a country having ever become great or free, whilst her mind lay in a state of ignorance, and it will be found, too, that whenever the intellect of a country was at its highest, then also was its glory greatest. National mind and national independence must, in fact, rise and fall together; and to say that a country can become great without the development of its intellect, is to argue that a man can fight best without weapons, and achieve a series of victories, whilst ignorant of the principles by which they can be obtained.

My object in writing the following Tale, which is

principally a domestic one, was to exhibit the piety, purity, and humble greatness of mind, which characterize so many of our countrymen and countrywomen, and which, perhaps, might in vain be looked for in so perfect a state among the inhabitants of any other country.

Some people have been pleased to say that I have overlooked the virtues of our peasantry ; but this none could say who has ever read my writings. If, however, there be individuals who will still persist in such an assertion, let them read this narrative of the MISER and then judge for themselves.

Two circumstances connected with this work also gratify me very much ; one is the fact of its having become the property of Mr. Duffy, through whose enterprise it will now reach, at an exceedingly reasonable rate, that class of the people from whose lives the virtues here depicted have been drawn ; the other is also indicative of the vast advantages which successful literature will necessarily confer on the country ;—my readers will understand me when I say, and I am proud to say it—that this is the first Irish Book which has ever been printed by a Steam Press made, under the direction of the Printer, upon an improved principle,

and manufactured in our native land. It is unnecessary to add more, as the superior manner in which the work is executed is a sufficient proof of the success that has attended this new manifestation of Irish skill.

DUBLIN, 21st February, 1846.

FARDOROUGHA THE MISER;

OR, THE

CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA.

CHAPTER I.

ON a gentle declivity facing the south, and sheltered by a sharp *Esker* or land-ridge, lay the long, low, whitewashed farm-house of Fardorougha Donovan of Lisnamona. There was little of artificial ornament about the place, but much of the rough, heart-stirring wildness of nature, as it appeared in a strong, vigorous district, well cultivated, but without being tamed down by those finer and more graceful touches, which now-a-days mark the skilful hand of the scientific agriculturist.

To the left waved a beautiful hazel glen, which gradually expanded into the meadows above mentioned. Up behind the house stood an ancient plantation of whitethorn, which, during the month of May, diffused its fragrance, its beauty, and its melody over the whole farm. The plain garden was hedged round by the graceful poplar, whilst here and there were studded over the fields either single trees or small groups of mountain-ash, a tree still more beautiful than the former. The small dells about the farm were closely covered with blackthorn and holly, with an occasional

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oak shooting up from some little cliff, and towering sturdily over its lowly companions. Here grew a thick interwoven mass of dog-tree, and upon a wild hedge-row, leaning like a beautiful wife upon a rugged husband, might be seen supported by clumps of blackthorn, that most fragrant and exquisite of creepers the delicious honey-suckle. Add to this the neat appearance of the farm itself, with its meadows and corn-fields waving to the soft sunny breeze of summer, and the reader may admit, that without possessing any striking features of pictorial effect, it would, nevertheless, be difficult to find an up-lying farm upon which the eye could rest with greater satisfaction.

This brief description we deemed it necessary to give of a place which, however humble, will be found the scene of the darkest and tenderest passions of the human heart.

It was on one of those nights in August, when the moon and stars shine through an atmosphere clear and cloudless with a mildness of lustre almost continental, that a horseman, advancing at a rapid pace, turned off a remote branch of road up a narrow lane, and, dismounting before a neat whitewashed cottage, gave a quick and impatient knock at the door. Almost instantly, out of a small window that opened on hinges, was protruded a broad female face, surrounded, by way of nightcap, with several folds of flannel, that had originally been white.

"Is Mary Moan at home?" said the horseman.

"For a maricle—ay!" replied the female; "who's *down* in the name o' goodness?"

"Why, thin, I'm thinkin' you'll be smilin' whin you hear it," replied the messenger. "The sorra one else than Honor Donovan, that's now marrid upon Fardoroughia Donovan to the tune of thirteen year. Bedad, time for her, any how—but, sure it 'ill be good whin it comes, we're thinkin'."

"Well, bettther late than never—the Lord be praised

for all his gifts, any how! Put your horse down to the mountin' stone, and I'll be wid you in half a jiffy, acushla."

She immediately drew in her head, and ere the messenger had well placed his horse at the aforesaid stirrup, or mounting-stone, which is an indispensable adjunct to the midwife's cottage, she issued out, cloaked and bonneted; for, in point of fact, her practice was so extensive, and the demands upon her attendance so incessant, that she seldom, if ever, slept, or went to bed, unless partially dressed. And such was her habit of vigilance, that she ultimately became an illustration of the old Roman proverb, *Non dormio omnibus*; that is to say, she could sleep as sound as a top to every possible noise except a knock at the door, to which she might be said, during the greater part of her professional life, to have been instinctively awake.

Having ascended the mounting-stone, and placed herself on the crupper, the guide and she, while passing down the narrow and difficult lane, along which they could proceed but slowly and with caution, entered into the following dialogue, she having first turned up the hood of her cloak over her bonnet, and tied a spotted cotton kerchief round her neck.

"This," said the guide, who was Fardorougha Donovan's servantman, "is a quare enough business, as some o' the nabours do be sayin'—marrid upon one another beyant thirteen year, an' ne'er a sign of a haporth till now. Why then begad it is quare."

"Whisht, whisht," replied Molly, with an expression of mysterious and superior knowledge; "don't be spakin' about what you don't understand—sure, nuttin's impossible to God, avick—don't you know that?"

"Oh, bedad, sure enough—that we must allow, whether or not;—still"—

"Very well; seein' that, what more have we to say, barrin' to hould our tongues. Childre sent late always come either for great good or great sarra to their

paarents—an' God grant that this may be for good to the honest people—for indeed honest people they are, by all accounts. But what myself wonders at is, that Honor Donovan never once opened her lips to me about it. However, God's will be done! The Lord send her safe over all her troubles, poor woman! And, now that we're out o' this thief of a lane, lay an for the bare life, and never heed me. I'm as good a horseman as yourself; and, indeed, I've a good right, for I'm an ould hand at it."

"I'm thinkin'," she added, after a short silence, "it's odd I never was much acquainted with the Donovans. I'm tould they're a hard pack, that loves the money, honest as they are."

"Faix," replied her companion, "let Fardoroughia alone for knowin' the value of a shillin'!—they're not in Europe can hould a harder grip of one."

His master, in fact, was a hard frugal man, and his mistress a woman of somewhat a similar character: both were strictly honest, but, like many persons to whom God has denied offspring, their hearts had for a considerable time before been placed upon money as their idol; for, in truth, the affections must be fixed upon something, and we generally find that where children are denied, the world comes in and hardens by its influence the best and tenderest sympathies of humanity.

After a journey of two miles they came out on a hay-track, that skirted an extensive and level sweep of meadow, along which they proceeded with as much speed as a pillionless midwife was capable of bearing.

Ere arriving at the house they were met by Fardoroughia himself, a small man, with dark, but well-set features, which being at no time very placid, appeared now to be absolutely gloomy, yet marked by strong and profound anxiety.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed on meeting them; "Is this Mary Moan?"

"It is—it is," she exclaimed: "how are all within?—Am I in time?"

"Only poorly," he returned; "you are, I hope."

The midwife, when they reached the door, got herself dismounted in all haste, and was about entering the house, when Fardorougha, laying his hand upon her shoulder, said in a tone of voice tremulous with apprehension—

"I need say nothing to you: what you can do you will do—but one thing I expect—if you see danger, call in assistance."

"It's all in the hands o' God, Fardorougha, acushla: be as aisy in your mind as you can: if there's need for more help you'll hear it; so keep the man an' horse both ready."

She then blessed herself, and entered the house, repeating a short prayer, or charm, which was supposed to possess uncommon efficacy in relieving cases of the nature she was then called upon to attend.

Fardorougha Donovan was a man of shrewd sense, and of strong, but not obvious or flexible feeling; that is to say, on strong occasions he felt accordingly, and exhibited very remarkable symptoms of the feeling that swayed him. In matters of a less important character, he was either deficient in sensibility altogether, or it affected him so slightly as not to be perceptible. What his disposition might have been, had his parental affections and domestic sympathies been cultivated by the tender intercourse which subsists between a parent and his children, it is not easy to say. On such occasions many a new and delightful sensation—many a sweet trait of affection previously unknown—and, oh! many, many a fresh impulse of rapturous emotion never before felt,—gushes out of the heart; all of which, were it not for the existence of ties so delightful, might have there lain, sealed up for ever. Where is the man who does not remember the strange impression of tumultuous delight which he experienced on finding

himself a husband ? And who does not recollect that nameless charm, amounting almost to a new sense, which pervaded his whole being with tenderness and transport on kissing the rose-bud lips of his first-born babe ? It is indeed by the ties of domestic life that the purity and affection and the general character of the human heart are best tried. What is there more beautiful than to see that fountain of tenderness multiplying its affections instead of diminishing them, according as claim after claim arises to make fresh demands upon its love. Love, and especially parental love, like jealousy, increases by what it feeds on. But, oh ! from what an unknown world of exquisite enjoyment are they shut out, to whom Providence has not vouchsafed those beloved beings on whom the heart lavishes the whole fulness of its rapture ! No wonder, that their own affections should wither in the cold gloom of disappointed hope, or their hearts harden into that moody spirit of worldly-mindedness which adopts for its offspring the miser's idol.

Whether Fardorougha felt the want of children acutely or otherwise, could not be inferred from any visible indication of regret on his part by those who knew him. His own wife, whose faculties of observation were so great and so frequent, was only able to suspect in the affirmative. For himself he neither murmured nor repined, but she could perceive that after a few years had passed, a slight degree of gloom began to settle on him, and an anxiety concerning his crops, and his few cattle, and the produce of his farm. He also began to calculate the amount of what might be saved from the fruits of their united industry. Sometimes, but indeed upon rare occasions, his temper appeared inclining to be irascible or impatient ; but in general it was grave, cold, and inflexible, without any outbreaks of passion, or the slightest disposition to mirth. His wife's mind, however, was by no means so cold as his, nor so free from the traces of that secret regret which preyed upon it.

She both murmured and repined, and often in terms which drew from Fardorougha a cool rebuke for her want of resignation to the will of God. As years advanced, however, her disappointment became harassing even to herself, and now that hope began to die away, her heart gradually partook of the cool worldly spirit which had seized upon the disposition of her husband. Though cultivating but a small farm, which they held at a smart rent, yet by the dint of frugality and incessant diligence they were able to add a little each year to the small stock of money which they had contrived to put together. Still would the unhappy reflection that they were childless steal painfully and heavily over them; the wife would sometimes murmur, and the husband reprove her, but in a tone so cool and indifferent that she could not avoid concluding that his own want of resignation, though not expressed, was at heart equal to her own. Each also became somewhat religious, and both remarkable for a punctual attendance upon the rites of their church and that in proportion as the love of temporal things overcame them. In this manner they lived upwards of thirteen years, when Mrs. Donovan declared herself to be in that situation which in due time rendered the services of Mary Moan necessary.

From the moment this intimation was given, and its truth confirmed, a faint light, not greater than the dim and trembling lustre of a single star, broke in upon the darkened affections and worldly spirit of Fardorougha Donovan. Had the announcement taken place within any reasonable period after his marriage, before he had become sick of disappointment, or had surrendered his heart from absolute despair to an incipient spirit of avarice, it would no doubt have been hailed with all the eager delight of unblighted hope and vivid affection; but now a new and subtle habit had been superinduced, after the last cherished expectation of the heart had departed; a spirit of foresight and

severe calculation descended on him, and had so nearly saturated his whole being, that he could not for some time actually determine whether the knowledge of his wife's situation was more agreeable to his affection, or repugnant to the parsimonious disposition which had quickened his heart into an energy incompatible with natural benevolence, and the perception of those tender ties which spring up from the relations of domestic life. For a considerable time this struggle between the two principles went on; sometimes a new hope would spring up, attended in the back-ground by a thousand affecting circumstances—on the other hand, some gloomy and undefinable dread of exigency, distress, and ruin, would wring his heart and sink his spirits down to positive misery. Notwithstanding this conflict between growing avarice and affection, the star of the father's love had risen, and though, as we have already said, its light was dim and unsteady, yet the moment a single opening occurred in the clouded mind, there it was to be seen serene and pure, a beautiful emblem of undying and solitary affection struggling with the cares and angry passions of life. By degrees the husband's heart became touched by the hopes of his younger years, former associations revived, and remembrances of past tenderness, though blunted in a heart so much changed, came over him like the breath of fragrance that has nearly passed away. He began, therefore, to contemplate the event without foreboding, and by the time the looked for period arrived, if the world and its debasing influences were not utterly overcome, yet nature and the quickening tenderness of a father's feelings had made a considerable progress in a heart from which they had been long banished.

Far different from all this was the history of his wife since her perception of an event so delightful. In her was no bitter and obstinate principle subversive of affection to be overcome. For although she had in latter years sunk into the painful apathy of a hopeless

spirit, and given herself somewhat to the world, yet no sooner did the unexpected light dawn upon her, than her whole soul was filled with exultation and rapture. The world and its influence passed away like a dream, and her heart melted into a habit of tenderness at once so novel and exquisite, that she often assured her husband she had never felt true happiness before.

Such are the respective states of feeling in which our readers find Fardorougha Donovan and his wife, upon an occasion whose consequences run too far into futurity for us to determine at present whether they are to end in happiness or misery.

For a considerable time that evening before the arrival of Mary Moan, the males of the family had taken up their residence in an inside kiln, where, after having kindled a fire in the draught hole, or what the Scotch call the "logie," they sat down and chatted in that kind of festive spirit which such an event uniformly produces among the servants of a family. Fardorougha himself remained for the most part with them, that is to say, except while ascertaining from time to time the situation of his wife. His presence, however, was only a restraint upon their good humour, and his niggardly habits caused some rather uncomplimentary epithets during his short visits of inquiry. It is customary upon such occasions, as soon as the mistress of the family is taken ill, to ask the servants to drink "an easy bout to the mistress, sir, and a speedy recovery—not forgettin' a safe landin' to the youngster, and, like a Christmas compliment, many of them to you both! Whoo! death alive, but that's fine stuff. Oh, be gorra, the mistress can't but thrive wid that in the house. Thank you, sir, an' wishin' her once more safe over her troubles!—Divil a better mistress ever," &c. &c. &c.

Here, however, there was nothing of the kind. Fardorougha's heart in the first instance was set against the expense, and besides, its present broodings resembled

the throes of pain which break out from the stupor that presses so heavily upon the exhausted functions of life in the crisis of a severe fever. He could not, in fact, rest nor remain for any length of time in the same spot. With a slow but troubled step he walked backward and forward, sometimes uttering indistinct ejaculations and broken sentences, such as no one could understand. At length he approached his own servants, and addressed the messenger, whose name was Nogher M'Cormick,

"Nogher," said he, "I'm troubled."

"Troubled! dad, Fardoroughha, you ought to be a happy and a thankful man this night, that is, if God sinds the misthress safe over it, as I hope he will, plase goodness."

"I'm poor, Nogher, I'm poor, and here's a family comin'."

"Faith, take care it's not sin you're committin' by spakin' as you're doin'."

"But you know I'm poor, Nogher."

"But I know you're *not*, Fardoroughha; but I'm afraid, if God hasn't said it, that your heart's too much fixed upon the world. Be my faix, it's on your knees you ought to be this same night, thankin' the Almighty for his goodness, an' not grumblin' an' sthreeelin' about the place, flyin' in the face of God for sendin' you an' your wife a blessin'—for sure I hear the Scripther says that all childre's a blessin' if they're resarved as sich; 'an' vo be to the man,' says Scripther, 'dat's born wid a millstone about his neck, esphisally if he's cast into the *say*.' I know you pray enough, but be me sowl, it hasn't improved your morals, or it's the misthress's health we'd be drinkin' in a good bottle of whiskey at the present time. Faix myself wouldn't be much surprised if she had a hard twist in quensequence; an' if she does, the fau't's your own an' not ours, for we're willin' as the flowers of May to drink all sorts o' good luck to her."

"Nogher," said the other, "it's truth a great dale of what you've said—may be all of it."

"Faith, I know," returned Nogher, "that about the whiskey is parfit gospel."

"In one thing I'll be advised by you, and that is, I'll go to my knees and pray to God to set my heart right, if it's wrong—I feel strange—strange, Nogher—happy, an' not happy."

"You needn't go to your knees at all," replied Nogher, "if you give us the whiskey; or, if you do pray, be in airnest, that your heart may be inclined to give it."

"You desearve none for them words," said Fardorougha, who felt that Nogher's humour jarred upon the better feelings that were rising within him,—“you desearve none, and you'll get none—for the present at least, an' I'm only a fool for spakin' to you.”

He then retired to the upper part of the kiln, where in a dark corner he knelt with a troubled heart, and prayed to God.

We doubt not but such of our readers as possess feeling, will perceive that Fardorougha was not only an object at this particular period of much interest, but also entitled to sincere sympathy. Few men in his circumstances could, or probably would, so earnestly struggle with a predominant passion as he did, though without education, or such a knowledge of the world as might enable him, by any observation of the human heart in others, to understand the workings of his own. He had not been ten minutes at prayer when the voice of his female servant was heard in loud and exulting tones, calling out ere she approached the kiln itself—

"Fardorougha, *ca woul thu?** Where's my *footin'*,† masher? Where's my arles?—Come in—come in,

* Where are you?

† To pay one's footing means in Ireland to give a present to a servant for any agreeable circumstance or event that happens for the *first* time; or upon entering any particular place of a humble character in order to testify your approval of what you may see.

you're a wantin' to kiss your son—the misthress is dyin' till you kiss your son."

The last words were uttered as she entered the kiln.

"Dyin'!" he repeated—"the misthress dyin'—oh, Susy, let a thousand childre go before *her*—dyin'! did you say dyin'?"

"Ay did I, an' it's truth too, but it's wid joy she's dyin' to see you kiss one of the purtiest young boys in all the barony of Lisnamona—myself's over head and ears in love with him inready."

He gave a rapid glance upwards, so much so, that it was scarcely perceptible, and immediately accompanied her into the house. The child in the meantime had been dressed, and lay on its mother's arm in the bed when its father entered. He approached the bedside and glanced at it—then at the mother who lay smiling beside it—she extended her hand to him whilst the soft tears of delight ran quietly down her cheeks. When he seized her hand he stooped to kiss her, but she put her other hand up and said—

"No, no, you must kiss *him* first."

He instantly stooped over the babe, took it in his arms, looked long and earnestly upon it, put it up near him, again gave it a long intense gaze, after which he raised its little mouth to his own, and then imprinted the father's first kiss upon the fragrant lips of his beloved first-born. Having gently deposited the precious babe upon its mother's breast, he caught her hand, and imprinted upon her lips a kiss;—but to those who understand it we need not describe it—to those who cannot, we could give no adequate notion of that which we are able in no other way to describe than by saying that it would seem as if the condensed enjoyment of a whole life were concentrated into that embrace of the child and mother.

When this tender scene was over, the midwife commenced—

"Well, if ever a man had reason to be thank——"

"Silence, woman," he exclaimed, in a voice which hushed her almost into terror.

"Let him alone," said the wife addressing her, "let him alone, I know what he feels."

"No," he replied, "even you, Honora, don't know it—my heart, my heart went astray, and there, under God and my Saviour, is the being that will be the salvation of his father."

His wife understood him and was touched; the tears fell fast from her eyes, and extending her hand to him, she said as he clasped it:

"Sure, Fardorougha, the world won't be so much in your heart now, nor your temper so dark as it was?"

He made no reply, but placing his other hand over his eyes, he sat in that posture for some minutes. On raising his head the tears were running as if involuntarily down his cheeks.

"Honor," said he, "I'll go out for a little—you can tell Mary Moan where any thing's to be had—let them all be treated so that they don't take too much—an' Mary Moan you won't be forgotten."

He then passed out, and did not appear for upwards of an hour, nor could any one of them tell where he had been.

"Well," said Honor, after he had left the room, "we're now married near fourteen years; and until this night I never see him shed a tear."

"But sure, acushla, if any thing can touch a father's heart the sight of his first child will. Now keep yourself aisy, avourneen, and tell me where the whiskey an' any thing else that may be a wantin' is, till I give these crathurs of sarvints a dhrop of something to comfort them."

At this time, however, Mrs. Donovan's mother and two sisters, who had for some hours previously been sent for, just arrived, a circumstance which once more touched the newly awakened chords of the mother's

heart, and gave her that confidence which the presence of "one's own blood," as the people express it, always communicates upon such occasions. After having kissed and admired the babe, and bedewed its face with the warm tears of affection, they piously knelt down, as is the custom among most Irish families, and offered up a short, but fervent prayer of gratitude as well for an event so happy, as for her safe delivery, and the future welfare of the mother and child. When this was performed, they set themselves to the distribution of the blythe meat or groaning malt, a duty which the midwife transferred to them with much pleasure, this being a matter which, except in cases of necessity, she considers beneath the dignity of her profession. The servants were accordingly summoned in due time, and headed by Nogher, soon made their appearance. In events of this nature, servants in Ireland, and we believe every where else, are always allowed a considerable stretch of good-humoured license in those observations which they are in the habit of making. Indeed this is not so much an extemporaneous indulgence of wit on their part, as a mere repetition of the set phrases and traditionary apothegms which have been long established among the peasantry, and as they are in general expressive of present satisfaction and good wishes for the future, so would it be looked upon as churlishness, and in some cases, a sign of ill-luck to neglect them on the part of the servants.

"Now," said Honor's mother to the servants of both sexes, "now, childre, that you've aite a trifle, you must taste somethin' in the way of dhrink. It would be too bad on *this* night, above all nights we've seen yet, not to have a glass to the little stranger's health, at all evints. Here, Nogher, thry this, avick —you never got a glass wid a warmer heart."

Nogher took the liquor, his grave face charged with suppressed humour, and first looking upon his fellow-servants with a countenance so droll yet dry that none

but themselves understood it, he then directed a very sober glance at the good woman.

"Thank you, ma'am," he exclaimed; "be goxy, sure enough if our hearts wouldn't get warm now, they'd never warm. A happy night it is for Fardorougha and the misthress, at any rate. I'll engage the stranger was worth waitin' for too. I'll hould a thrifle, he's the beauty o' the world this minnit—an' I'll engage it's breeches we'll have to be gettin' for him some o' these days, the darlin'. Well, here's his health, any way; an' may he"—

"Husht, arogorah!" exclaimed the midwife; "stop, I say—the tree afore the fruit, all the world over: don't you know, an' bad win to you, that if the sthranger was to go to-morrow, as good might come after him, while the paarent stocks are to the fore. The mother and father first, acushla, an' *thin* the sthranger."

"Many thanks to you, Mrs. Moan," replied Nogher, "for settin me right—sure we'll know something ourselves whin it comes our own turn, plase goodness. If the misthress isn't asleep, by goxy, I'd call in to her, that I'm dhrinkin' her health."

"She's not asleep," said her mother; "an' proud she'll be, poor thing, to hear you, Nogher."

"Misthress!" he said in a loud voice, "are you asleep, ma'am?"

"No, indeed, Nogher," she replied, in a good-humoured tone of voice.

"Well, ma'am," said Nogher, still in a loud voice, and scratching his head, "here's your health! an' now that the ice is bruk—be goxy, an' so it is sure," said he in an undertone to the rest—"Peggy, behave yourself," he continued to one of the servant-maids, "mocking's catchin'; faix, you dunna what's afore yourself yet—beg pardon—I'm forgettin' myself—and now that the ice is *bruk*, ma'am," he resumed, "you must be dacent for the futher. Many a bottle, plase

goodness, we'll have this way yet. Your health, ma'am, an' a speedy recovery to you—an' a sudden uprise—not forgettin' the masther—long life to him!"

"What!" said the midwife, "are you forgettin' the sthranger?"

Nogher looked her full in the face, and opening his mouth, without saying a word, literally pitched the glass of spirits to the very bottom of his throat.

"Beggin' your pardon, ma'am," he replied, "is it three healths you'd have me dhrink wid the one glassful?—not myself, indeed; faix, I'd be long sorry to make so little of him—if he was a bit of a *girsha*,* I'd not scruple to give him a corner o' the glass, but, bein' a young man, althers the case intirely—he must have a bumper for himself."

"A *girsha*!" said Peggy, his fellow-servant, feeling the indignity just offered to her sex—"Why, thin, bad manners to your assurance for that same! A *girsha*'s as well intitled to a full glass as a *gorsoon*, any day."

"Husht, a colleen," said Nogher good-humouredly, "sure its takin' patthern by sich a fine example you ought to be. This, Mrs. Moan, is the purty crature I was mentionin' as we came along, that intinds to get dovetailed wid myself some o' these days—that is, if she can bring me into good humour, the thief."

"And if it does happen," said Peggy, "you'll have to look sharp after him, Mrs. Moan. He's pleasant enough now, but I'll be bound no man 'ill know betther how to hang his fiddle behind the doort† whin he comes home to us."

"Well, acushla, sure he may, if he likes, but if he does, he knows what's afore him—not saying that he ever will, I hope, for it's a woful case whin it comes to that,‡ ahagur."

* Little girl. † To leave his good humour toward him.

‡ This refers to an opinion which was prevalent in Ireland with reference to the old class of midwives, viz.: that in cases similar to Honora Donovan's, they possessed the power of trans-

"Faix, it's a happy story for half the poor wives of the parish that *you are* in it," said Peggy, "sure only for"——

"*Be dhe hush, Vread, agus glak shogh*—hould your tongue, Peggy, and taste this," said the mother of her misthress, handing her a glass: "if you intind to go together, in the name o' goodness fear God more than the midwife, if you want to have luck an' grace."

"Oh, is it all this?" exclaimed the sly girl; "faix, it'll make me *hearty* if I drink so much—bedeed it will. Well, misthress, your health, an' a speedy uprise to you—an' the same to the masther, not forgettin' the s thranger—long life an' good health to him!"

She then put the glass to her lips, and after several small sips, appearing to be so many unsuccessful attempts at overcoming her reluctance to drink it, she at length took courage, and bolting it down, immediately applied her apron to her mouth, making at the same time two or three wry faces, gasping, as if to recover the breath, which it did *not* take away from her.

The midwife, in the mean time, felt that the advice just given to Nogher and Peggy contained a clause somewhat more detrimental to her importance than was altogether agreeable to her; and to sit calmly under any imputation that involved a diminution of her authority was not within the code of her practice.

"If they go together," she observed, "it's right to fear God, no doubt; but that's no *raison* why they shouldn't pay respect to him that can sarve them *or otherwise*."

"Nobody says against that, Mrs. Moan," replied the other; "it's all fair, an' nothin' else."

ferring the penalty of woman's original guilt to the husband, if he chanced to be brutal. The wife merely giving birth to the offspring, the other bearing all the pain. In many parts of Ireland it is yet believed that they possess this power.

"A midwife's nuttin' in your eyes, we suppose," rejoined Mrs. Moan; "but maybe there's thim belongin' to you could tell to the conthrairy."

"Obliged to you, we suppose, for your sarvices—an' we're not denying that aither."

"For me sarvices—maybe thim same sarvices warn't very sweet or treaclesome to some o' thim," she rejoined, with a mysterious and somewhat indignant toss of the head.

"Well, well," said the other in a friendly tone, "that makes no maxim one way or the other, only dhrink this—sure we're not goin' to quarrel about it, any how."

"God forbid, Honor More; but sure it 'ud ill become me to hear my own carrecther—no, no, avourneen," she exclaimed, putting back the glass, "I can't take it this-a-way; it doesn't agree wid me; you must put a grain o' shugar an' a dhrop o' bilin' wather to it. It may do very well *hard** for the servants, but I'm not used to that."

"I herd that myself afore," observed Nogher, "that she never dhrinks hard whiskey. Well, myself never tasted punch but wanst, an' be goxy it's great dhrink. Death alive, Honora More," he continued, in his most insinuating manner, "make us all a sup. Sure, blood alive, this is not a common night, afther what God has sint us; Fardoroughia himself would allow you, if he was here; deed, bedad, he as good as promised me he would; an' you know we have the young customer's health to dhrink yet."

"Throth, an' you ought," said the midwife; "the boy says nuttin' but the thruth—it's not a common night; an' if God has given Fardoroughia substance, he shouldn't begridge a little, if it was only to show a grateful heart."

"Well, well," said Honora More—which means

* Pure, unmixed.

great Honora, in opposition to her daughter, Fardorougha's wife; this being an epithet adopted for the purpose of contra-distinguishing the members of a family when called by the same name—"Well," said she, "I suppose it's as good. My own heart, dear knows, is not in a thrifle, only I have my doubts about Fardorougha. However, what's done can't be undone; so, once we mix it, he'll be too late to spake if he comes in, any way."

The punch was accordingly mixed, and they were in the act of sitting down to enjoy themselves with more comfort when Fardorougha entered. As before, he was silent and disturbed, neither calm nor stern, but labouring, one would suppose, under strong feelings of a decidedly opposite character. On seeing the punch made, his brow gathered into something like severity: he looked quickly at his mother-in-law, and was about to speak, but pausing a moment, he sat down, and after a little time said in a kind voice—

"It's right, it's right,—for *his* sake, an' on *his* account, have it; but, Honora, let there be no waste."

"Sure we had to make it for Mrs. Moan whether or not," said his mother-in-law—"she can't take it hard, poor woman."

Mrs. Moan, who had gone to see her patient, having heard his voice again, made her appearance with the child in her arms, and with all the importance which such a burthen usually bestows upon persons of her calling.

"Here," said she, presenting him the infant, "take a proper look at this fellow. That I may never, if a finer swaddy ever crossed my hands. Throth if you wor dead to-morrow he'd be mistaken for you—your born image—the sorra thing else—eh, alanna—the Lord love my son—faix you've daddy's nose upon you, any how—an' his chin to a turn. Oh thin, Fardorougha, but there's many a couple rowlin' in wealth that 'ud be proud to have the likes of him; an' that must die and let it all go to strangers, or to them that doesn't

càre about them, 'ceptin' to get grabbin' at what they have, an' that think every day a year that they're above the sod. What! *manim-an*—kiss your child, man alive. That I may never, but he looks at the darlin' as if it was a sod of turf! Throth you're not worthy of havin' such a bully."

Fardoroughia, during this dialogue, held the child in his arms and looked upon it earnestly as before, but without betraying any visible indication of countenance that could enable a spectator to estimate the nature of what passed within him. At length there appeared in his eye a barely perceptible expression of benignity, which, however, soon passed away, and was replaced by a shadow of gloom and anxiety. Nevertheless in compliance with the commands of the midwife, he kissed its lips, after which the servants all gathered round it, each lavishing upon the little urchin those hyperbolical expressions of flattery, which, after all, most parents are willing to receive as something approximating to Gospel truth.

"Bedad," said Nogher, "that fellow 'ill be the flower of the Donovans, if God spares him—be goxty I'll engage he'll give the purty girls many a sore heart yet—he'll play the dickens wid 'em or I'm not here—awough! do you hear how the young rogue gives tongue at that; the sorra one o' the shaver but knows what I'm sayin'."

Nogher always had an eye to his own comfort, no matter under what circumstances he might be placed. Having received the full glass, he grasped his master's hand, and in the usual set phrases, to which, however, was added, much *extempore* matter of his own, he drank the baby's health, congratulating the parents in his own blunt way upon this accession to their happiness. The other servants continued to pour out their praises in terms of delight and astonishment at his accomplishments and beauty, each, in imitation of Nogher, concluding with a toast in nearly the same words.

How sweet from other lips is the praise of those we love ! Fardorougha, who a moment before looked upon his infant's face with an unmoved countenance, felt incapable of withstanding the flattery of his own servants when uttered in favour of the child. His eye became complacent, and while Nogher held his hand, a slight pressure in return was proof sufficient that his heart beat in accordance with the hopes they expressed of all that the undeveloped future might bestow upon him.

When their little treat was over, the servants withdrew for the night, and Fardorougha himself, still labouring under an excitement so complicated and novel, retired rather to shape his mind to some definite tone of feeling than to seek repose.

How strange is life, and how mysteriously connected is the wo or the weal of a single family with the great mass of human society. We beg the reader to stand with us upon a low, sloping hill, a little to the left of Fardorougha's house, and, after having solemnized his heart by a glance at the starry gospel of the skies, to cast his eye upon the long whitewashed dwelling, as it shines faintly in the visionary distance of a moonlight night. How full of tranquil beauty is the hour, and how deep the silence, except when it is broken by the loud baying of the watch-dog, as he barks in sullen fierceness at his own echo ; or perhaps there is nothing heard but the *sugh* of the mountain river, as with booming sound it rises and falls in the distance, filling the ear of midnight with its wild and continuous melody. Look around and observe the spirit of repose which sleeps on the face of nature, think upon the dream of human life, and of all the inexplicable wonders which are read from day to day in that miraculous page—the heart of man. Neither your eye nor imagination need pass beyond that humble roof before you, in which it is easy to perceive by the lights passing at this unusual hour across the windows, that there is something added either to their joy or to their sorrow. There is the

mother, in whose heart was accumulated the unwasted tenderness of years, forgetting all the past in the first intoxicating influence of an unknown extasy, and looking to the future with the eager aspirations of affection. There is the husband, too, in whose heart the lank devil of the avaricious—the famine-struck god of the miser, is even now contending with the almost extinguished love which springs up in a father's bosom on the sight of his first-born.

Reader, who can tell whether the entrancing visions of the happy mother, or the gloomy anticipations of the apprehensive husband, are more prophetic of the destiny which is before the child? Many, indeed, and various are the hopes and fears felt under that roof, and deeply will their lights and shadows be blended in the life of the being whose claims are so strong upon their love. There,—for some time past the lights in the windows have appeared less frequently, one by one we presume the inmates have gone to repose, not another gleam is visible, the last candle is extinguished, and this humble section of the great family of man is now at rest, with the veil of a dark and fearful future unlifted before them.

CHAPTER II.

DURING the few days that intervened between our hero's birth and his christening, Fardorougha's mind was engaged in forming some fixed principle by which to guide his heart in the conflict that still went on between avarice and affection. In this task he imagined that the father predominated over the miser almost without a struggle; whereas, the fact was, that the subtle passion, ever more ingenious than the simple one, changed its external character, and came out in the shape of affectionate forecast and provident regard for the wants and prospects of his child. This gross deception of his own heart he felt as a relief, for, though smitten with the world, it did not escape him that the birth of his little one, all its circumstances considered, ought to have caused him to feel an enjoyment unalloyed by the care and regret which checked his sympathies as a parent. Neither was conscience itself altogether silent, nor the blunt remonstrances of his servants wholly without effect. Nay, so completely was his judgment overreached, that he himself attributed this anomalous state of feeling to a virtuous effort of Christian duty, and looked upon the encroachments which a desire of saving wealth had made on his heart, as a manifest proof of much parental attachment. He consequently loved his wealth through the medium of his son, and laid it down as a fixed principle that every act of parsimony on his part was merely one of prudence, and had the love of a father and an affectionate consideration for his child's future welfare to justify it.

The first striking instance of this close and gripping spirit appeared upon an occasion which seldom fails to open, in Ireland at least, all the warm and generous impulses of our nature. When his wife deemed it necessary to make those hospitable preparations for

their child's christening which are so usual in the country, he treated her intention of complying with this old custom, as a direct proof of unjustifiable folly and extravagance—nay, his remonstrance with her exhibited such remarkable good sense and prudence, that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to controvert it, or to perceive that it originated from any other motive than a strong interest in the true welfare of their child.

“Will our wastin' meat and money, an' for that matther health and time on his christenin', aither give him more health, or make us love him betther. It's not the first time, Honor, that I've heard yourself make little of your nabours for goin' beyant their ability in gittin' up big christenins. Don't be foolish now thin when it comes to your own turn.”

The wife took the babe up, and after having gazed affectionately on his innocent features, replied to him in a voice of tenderness and reproof—

“God knows, Fardoroughia, an' if I *do* act wid folly, as you call it, in gettin' ready his christenin', surely, surely you oughtn't to blame the mother for that—little I thought, acushla oge, that your own father 'ud begrudge you as good a christenin' as is put over any other nabour's child. I'm afraid, Fardoroughia he's not as much in your heart as he ought to be.”

“It's a poor proof of love for him, Honor, to put to the bad what may an' would be sarviceable to him hereafter. You only think for the present, but I can't forget that he's to be settled in the world, an' you know yourself what poor means we have of doin' that, an' that if we begin to be extravagant an' wasteful bekase God has sent him, we may beg wid him afore long.”

“There's no danger of us beggin' wid him. No,” she continued, the pride of a mother having been touched, “my boy will never beg—no avourneen—you never will—nor shame or disgrace will never come upon him aither. Have you no trust in God, Fardoroughia?”

"God never helps them that neglect themselves, Honor."

"But if it was plasing to his will to remove him from us, would you ever forgive yourself not lettin' him have a christenin' like another child?" rejoined the persevering mother.

"The priest," replied the good man, "will do as much for the poor child as for the rich—there's but one saycrament for both—any thing else is waste, as I said, an I won't give in to it. You don't considher that your way of it 'ud spend as much in one day as 'ud clothe him for two or three years."

"May I never sin this day, Fardorougha, but one 'ud think you're tired of him already. By not givin' in to what's dacent you know you'll only fret me—a thing no man wid half a heart 'ud do to any woman supportin' a baby as I am—a fretted nurse makes a child sick, as Molly Moan told you before she went, so that it's not on my own account I'm spakin', but on his—poor weeny pet—the Lord love him! Look at his innocent purty little face, an' how can you have the heart, Fardorougha? Come, avourneen—give way to me this wanst—troth if you do, you'll see how I'll nurse him—an' what a darlin' lump o' sugar I'll have him for you in no time!"

He paused a while at this delicate and affecting appeal of the mother, but except by a quick glance that passed from her to their child, it was impossible to say whether or not it made any impression on his heart, or in the slightest degree changed his resolution.

"Well, well," said he, "let me alone now—I'll think of it—I'll turn it over and see what's best to be done; do you the same, Honor, an' maybe your own sinse will bring you to my side of the question at last."

The next day his wife renewed the subject with unabated anxiety, but instead of expressing any change in her favour, Fardorougha declined even to enter into it at all. An evasive reply was all she could extort

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from him, with an assurance that he would in a day or two communicate the resolution to which he might finally come. She perceived at once, that the case was hopeless, and after one last ineffectual attempt to bring him round, she felt herself forced to abandon it. The child, therefore, much to the mother's mortification, was baptized without a christening, unless the mere presence of the godfather and godmother, in addition to Fardoroughia's own family, could be said to constitute one.

Our readers, perhaps, are not aware that a cause of deep anxiety hitherto unnoticed by us, operated with latent power upon Fardoroughia's heart. But so strong in Ireland is the beautiful superstition—if it can with truth be termed so—that children are a blessing, only when received as such, that even though supported by the hardest and most shameless of all vices—avarice, Fardoroughia, had not nerve to avow this most unnatural source of his distress. The fact, however, was, that to a mind so constituted, the apprehensions of a large family, was in itself a consideration which he thought might, at a future period of their lives, reduce both him and his to starvation and death. Our readers may remember Nogher M'Cormack's rebuke to him, when he heard Fardoroughia allude to this: and so accessible was he *then* to the feeling, that on finding his heart at variance with it, he absolutely admitted his error, and prayed to God that he might be enabled to overcome it.

It was therefore on the day subsequent to the baptism of young Connor, for so had the child been called after his parental grandfather, that as a justification for his own conduct in the matter of the christening, he disclosed to his wife with much reluctance and embarrassment, this undivulged source of his fears for the future, alleging it as a just argument for his declining to be guided by her opinion.

The indignant sympathies of the mother abashed, on this occasion, the miserable and calculating impiety of the husband—her reproaches were open and unshrink-

ing, and her moral sense of his conduct just and beautiful.

"Fardorougha," said she, "I thought up to this time—to this day, that there was nothing in your heart but too much of the world; but now I'm afeard, if God hasn't sed it, that the devil himself's there. You're frettin' for fraid of a family—but has God sent us any but this one yit? No—an' I wouldn't be surprised if the Almighty would punish your guilty heart, by making the child he gave you, a curse, instead of a blessin'. I think as it is, he has brought little pleasure to you for so far, and if your heart hardens as he grows up, it's more unhappy you'll get every day you live."

"That's very fine talk, Honor; but to people in our condition, I can't see any very great blessin' in a houseful of childre. If we're able to provide for this one, we'll have rason to be thankful without wishing for more."

"It's my opinion, Fardorougha, you don't love the child."

"Change that opinion then, Honor; I do love the child—but there's no needcessty for blowin' it about to every one I meet. If I didn't love him, I wouldn't feel as I do about all the hardships that may be before him. Think of what a bad saison, or a failure of the crops, might bring us all to! God grant that we mayn't come to the bag and staff before he's settled in the world at all, poor thing."

"Oh, very well Fardorougha, you may make yourself as unhappy as you like; for me, I'll put my trust in the Saviour of the world for my child. If you can trust in any one better than God, do so."

"Honor, there's no use in this talk—it 'ill do nothing aither for him or us—besides, I have no more time to discoorse about it."

He then left her, but as she viewed his dark inflexible features ere he went, an oppressive sense of something not far removed from affliction weighed her down. The child had been asleep in her arms during the foregoing

dialogue, and after his father had departed, she placed him in the cradle, and throwing the corner of her blue apron over her shoulder, she rocked him into a sounder sleep, swaying herself at the same time to and fro, with that inward sorrow, of which, among the lower classes of Irish females, this motion is uniformly expressive.

It is not to be supposed, however, that as the early graces of childhood gradually expanded (as they did) into more than ordinary beauty, the avarice of the father was not occasionally encountered in its progress by sudden gushes of love for his son. It was impossible for any parent, no matter how strongly the hedious idol of mammon might sway his heart, to look upon a creature so fair and beautiful, without being frequently touched into something like affection. The fact was, that as the child advanced towards youth, the two principles we are describing nearly kept pace one with the other. That the bad and formidable passion made rapid strides, must be admitted; but that it engrossed the whole spirit of the father, is not true. The mild and gentle character of the boy—his affectionate disposition, and the extraordinary advantages of his person, could not fail sometimes to surprise his father into sudden bursts of affection. But these, when they occurred, were looked upon by Fardoroughia, as so many proofs that he still entertained for the boy love sufficient to justify a more intense desire of accumulating wealth for his sake. Indeed, ere the lad had numbered thirteen summers, Fardoroughia's character as a miser had not only gone far abroad through the neighbourhood, but was felt by the members of his own family with almost merciless severity. From habits of honesty, and a decent sense of independence, he was now degraded to rapacity and meanness; what had been prudence, by degrees degenerated into cunning; and he who when commencing life, was looked upon only as a saving man, had now become notorious for extortion and usury.

A character such as this, among a people of generous

and lively feeling like the Irish, is in every state of life the object of intense and undisguised abhorrence. It was with difficulty he could succeed in engaging servants, either for domestic or agricultural purposes; and, perhaps, no consideration, except the general kindness which was felt for his wife and son, would have induced any person whatsoever to enter into his employment. Honor and Connor did what in them lay to make the dependents of the family experience as little of Fardorougha's griping tyranny as possible. Yet with all their kind-hearted ingenuity, and secret bounty, they were scarcely able to render their situation barely tolerable.

It would be difficult to find any language, no matter, what pen might wield it, capable of portraying the love which Honor O'Donovan bore to her gentle, her beautiful, and her *only* son. Ah! there, in that last epithet, lay the charm which wrapt her soul in him, and in all that related to his welfare. The moment she saw that it was not the will of God to bless them with other offspring, her heart gathered about him with a jealous tenderness, which trembled into agony at the idea of his loss.

Her love for him, *then* multiplied itself into many hues, for he was in truth the prism, on which when it fell, all the varied beauties of its colours became visible. Her heart gave not forth the music of a single instrument, but breathed the concord of sweet sounds, as heard from the blended melody of many. Far different from these were the feelings of Fardorougha, on finding that he was to be the first and the last vouchsafed to their union. A single regret, however, scarcely felt, touched even him, when he reflected that if Connor were to be removed from them, their hearth must become desolate. But then came the fictitious conscience, with its nefarious calculations, to prove that in their present circumstances, the dispensation which withheld others was a blessing to him that was given.

“Even Connor himself,” argued the miser, “will be the gainer by it, for what would my trifle of money be among so many?”

The pleasure, however, that is derived from the violation of natural affection, is never either full or satisfactory. The gratification felt by Fardoroughia, upon reflecting that no further addition was to be made to their family, resembled that which a hungry man feels who dreams he is partaking of a luxurious banquet. Avarice, it is true, like fancy, was gratified; but the enjoyment, though rich to that particular passion, left behind it a sense of emptiness, and an unconscious remorse which gnawed his heart with a slow and heavy pain, that operated like a smothered fire, wasting what it preys upon, in secrecy and darkness. In plainer terms, he was not happy, but so absorbed in the ruling passion—the pursuit of wealth, that he felt afraid to analyze his anxiety, or trace to its true source the cause of his misery.

In the mean time, his boy grew up the pride and ornament of the parish, idolized by his mother, and beloved by all who knew him. Limited and scanty was the education which his father could be prevailed on to bestow upon him; but there was nothing that could deprive him of his natural good sense, nor of the affections which his mother’s love had drawn out and cultivated. One thing was remarkable in him, which we mention with reluctance, as it places his father’s character in a frightful point of view; it is rarely witnessed, even in the purest and most affectionate circles of domestic life. But let not our readers infer either from what we have written, or from any thing we may write, that Fardoroughia hated this lovely and delightful boy; on the contrary, earth contained not an object, except his money, which he loved *so well*. His affection for him, however, was only such as could proceed from the drugs of a defiled and perverted heart. This is not saying much, but

it is saying all. What in him was parental attachment, would in another man, to such a son, be unfeeling and detestable indifference. His heart sank on contemplating even the pittance he allowed for Connor's education; and no remonstrance could prevail on him to clothe the boy with common decency. Pocket-money was out of the question, as were all those considerate indulgences to youth, that blunt, when timely afforded; the edge of early anxiety to know those amusements of life, which if not innocently gratified before passion gets strong, are apt to produce at a later period that giddy intoxication, which has been the destruction of thousands. When Connor, however, grew up, and began to think for himself, he could not help feeling, that from a man so absolutely devoted to wealth as his father was, to receive even the slenderest proof of affection, was in this case no common manifestation of the attachment he bore him. There was still a higher and nobler motive. He could not close his ears to the character which had gone abroad of his father, and from that principle of generosity which induces a man, even when ignorant of the quarrel, to take the weaker side, he fought his battles, until in the end he began to believe them just. But the most obvious cause of the son's attachment we have not mentioned, and it is useless to travel into vain disquisitions for that truth which may be found in the instinctive impulses of nature. He was Connor's father, and though penurious in every thing that regarded even his son's common comfort, he had never uttered a harsh word to him during his life, or denied him any gratification which could be had *without* money. Nay, a kind word, or a kind glance, from Fardorougha, fired the son's resentment against the world which traduced him; for how could it be otherwise, when the habitual defence made by him when arraigned for his penury, was an anxiety to provide for the future welfare and independence of his son.

Many characters in life appear difficult to be understood, but if those who wish to analyze them only consulted human nature, instead of rushing into far-fetched theories, and traced with patience the effect which interest, or habit, or inclination is apt to produce on men of a peculiar temperament, when placed in certain situations, there would be much less difficulty in avoiding those preposterous exhibitions which run into caricature, or outrage the wildest combinations that can be formed from the common elements of humanity.

CHAPTER III.

WE shall beg our readers to suppose that young Connor is now twenty-two years of age, and request them, besides, to prepare for the gloom which is about to overshadow our story.

We have already stated that Fardorougha was not only an extortioner but a usurer. Now, as some of our readers may be surprised that a man in his station of life could practise usury, or even extortion, to any considerable extent, we feel it necessary to inform them, that there exists among Irish farmers a class of men who stand, with respect to the surrounding poor and improvident, in a position precisely analogous to that which is occupied by a Jew or money-lender among those in the higher classes who borrow and are extravagant on a larger scale. If, for instance, a struggling small farmer have to do with a needy landlord or an unfeeling agent, who threatens to seize or eject if the rent be not paid up to the day, perhaps this small farmer is forced to borrow from one of those rustic Jews the full amount of the gale; for this he gives him at a valuation dictated by the lender's avarice and his own distress, the oats, or potatoes, or hay, which he is not able to dispose of in sufficient time to meet the demand that is upon him. This property the miser draws home, and stacks or houses until the markets are high, when he disposes of it at a price which often secures for him a profit amounting to one-third, and occasionally one-half above the sum lent, upon which, in the mean time, interest is accumulating. For instance, if the accommodation be twenty pounds, property to that amount at a ruinous valuation is brought home by the accommodator. This perhaps sells for thirty, thirty-five, or forty pounds, so that, deducting the labour of preparing it for market, there is a gain of fifty.

seventy-five, or an hundred per cent., besides, probably, ten per cent. interest, which is altogether distinct from the former. This class of persons will also take a joint promissory note, or, in fact, any collateral security they know to be valid; and if the contract be not fulfilled, they immediately pounce upon the guarantee. They will, in fact, as a mark of their anxiety to assist a neighbour in distress, receive a pig from a widow, or a ewe from a struggling small farmer, at thirty or forty per cent. beneath its value, and claim the merit of being a friend into the bargain. Such men are bitter enemies to paper money, especially to notes issued by branch banks, which they never take in payment. It is amusing, if a person could forget the distress which occasions the scene, to observe one of these men producing an old stocking, or a long black leathern purse, or a calf-skin pocket book with the hair on, and counting down, as if he gave out his heart's blood drop by drop, the specific sum, uttering at the same time a most lugubrious history of his own poverty, and assuring the poor wretch he is fleecing, that if he, (the miser) gives way to his good nature, he must ultimately become the victim of his own benevolence. In no case, however, do they put more in the purse or stocking than is just then wanted, and sometimes they will pretend to be short a guinea or ten shillings, which they borrow from a neighbour, or remit to the unfortunate dupe in the course of the day. This they do in order to enhance the obligation, and give a distinct proof of their poverty. Let not, therefore, the gentlemen of the Minorities, nor our P——s and our M——s nearer home, imagine for a moment that they engross the spirit of rapacity and extortion to themselves. To the credit of the class, however, to which they belong, such persons are not so numerous as formerly, and to the still greater honour of the peasantry be it said, the devil himself is not hated with half the detestation which is borne them. In order that the reader may understand our motive

for introducing such a description as we have now given, it will be necessary for us to request him to accompany a stout, well-set young man, named Bartle Flanagan, along a green ditch, which, planted with osiers, leads to a small meadow belonging to Fardorougha Donovan. In this meadow his son Connor is now making hay, and on seeing Flanagan approach, he rests on the top of his rake, and exclaims in a soliloquy :—

“God help you and yours, Bartle—if it was in *my* power, I take God to witness, I’d make up wid a willin’ heart for all the hardship and misfortune my father brought upon you all.”

He then resumed his labour, in order that the meeting between him and Bartle might take place with less embarrassment, for he saw at once that the former was about to speak to him.

“Isn’t the weather too hot, Connor, to work bare-headed. I think you ought to keep on your hat.

“Bartle, how are you—off or on it’s the same thing; hat or no hat, it’s broilin’ weather, the Lord be praised; what news, Bartle?”

“Not much, Connor, but what you know—a family that was strugglin’ but honest, brought to dissolation. We’re broken up; my father and mother’s both livin’ in a cabin they took from Billy Nulty; Mary and Alick’s gone to sarvice, an’ myself’s just on my way to hire wid the last man I ought to go to—your father; that is, supposin’ we can agree.”

“As heaven’s above me, Bartle, there’s not a man in the county this day sorrier for what has happened than myself. But the truth is, that when my father heard of Tom Grehan, that was your security, havin’ gone to America, he thought every day a month till the note was due. My mother an’ I did all we could, but you know his temper; ’twas no use. God knows, as I said before, I’m heart sorry for it.”

“Every one knows, Connor, that if your mother and

you had your way an' will, your father wouldn't be sich a screw as he is."

"In the mean time don't forget that he is my father, Bartle, an' above all things, remember that I'll allow no man to speak disparagingly of him in my presence."

"I believe you'll allow, Connor, that he was a scourge an' a curse to us, an' that none of us ought to like a bone in his skin."

"It couldn't be expected you would, Bartle; but you must grant, after all, that he was only recoverin' his own. Still, when you know what my feeling is upon the business, I don't think it's generous in you to bring it up between us."

"I could bear his harassin' us out of house an' home," proceeded the other, "only for one thought that still crasses in an me."

"What is that, Bartle?—God knows I can't help feelin' for you," he added, smote with the desolation which his father had brought upon the family.

"He lent us forty pounds," proceeded the young man; and when he found that Tom Grehan, our security, went to America, he came down upon us the minute the note was due, canted all we had at half price, and turned us to starve upon the world; now, I could bear that, but there is one thing——"

"That's twice you spoke about that one thing," said Connor, somewhat sharply, for he felt hurt at the obstinacy of the other, in continuing a subject so distressing to him; "but," he continued, in a milder tone, "tell me, Bartle, for goodness' sake, what it is, an' let us put an end to the discoorse. I'm sure it must be unpleasant to both of us."

"It doesn't signify," replied the young man, in a desponding voice—"she's gone; it's all over wid me there; I'm a beggar—I'm a beggar."

"Bartle," said Connor, taking his hand, "you're too much down-hearted; come to us, but first go to my

father; I know you'll find it hard to deal with him. Never mind that, whatever he offers you, close with him, an' take my word for it that my mother and I between us, will make you up dacent wages; an' sorry I am that it's come to this with you, poor fellow."

Bartle's cheek grew pale as ashes; he wrung Connor's hand with all his force, and fixed an unshrinking eye on him as he replied—

"Thank you, Connor, *now*—but I hope I'll live to thank you better *yet*, and if I do, you needn't thank me for any return I may make you or yours. I will close wid your father, an' take whatsoever he'll offer me; for Connor," and he wrung his hand again—"Connor O'Donovan, I haven't a house or home this day, nor a place under God's canopy where to lay my head, except upon the damp floor of my father's naked cabin. Think of that, Connor, an' think if I can forget it; still" he added, "you'll see, Connor—Connor, *you'll see how I'll forgive it.*"

"It's a credit to yourself to spake as you do," replied Connor: "call this way after seein' my father, an' let me know what's done; an' I hope, Bartle, you an' I will have some pleasant days together."

"Ay, an' pleasant nights too, I hope," replied the other; "to be sure I'll call; but if you take my advice, you'd tie a handkerchy about your head; it's mad hot, an' enough to give one a faver, bareheaded."

Having made this last observation, he leaped across a small drain that bounded the meadow, and proceeded up the fields to Fardorougha's house.

Bartle Flanagan was a young man about five feet six in height, but of a remarkable compact and athletic form. His complexion was dark, but his countenance open, and his features well set and regular. Indeed; his whole aspect might be termed bland and prepossessing. If he ever appeared to disadvantage, it was whilst under the influence of resentment, during which

his face became pale as death, nay, almost livid, and, as his brows were strong and black, the contrast between them and his complexion changed the whole expression of his countenance into that of a person whose enmity a prudent man would avoid. He was not quarrelsome, however, nor subject to any impetuous bursts of passion;—his resentments, if he retained any, were either dead or silent, or at all events, so well regulated that his acquaintances looked upon him as a young fellow of a good humoured and friendly disposition. It is true, a hint had gone abroad that on one or two occasions he was found deficient in courage; but as the circumstances referred to were rather unimportant, his conduct by many was attributed rather to good sense and a disinclination to quarrel on frivolous grounds, than to positive cowardice. Such he was, and such he is, now that he has entered upon the humble drama of our story.

On arriving at Fardoroughia's house, he found that worthy man at dinner, upon potatoes and a cold bone of bacon. He had only a few minutes before returned from the residence of the County Treasurer, with whom he went to lodge, among other sums, that which was so iniquitously wrung from the ruin of the Flanagans. It would be wrong to say that he felt in any degree embarrassed on looking into the face of one whom he had so oppressively injured. The recovery of his usurious debts, no matter how merciless the process, he considered only as an act of strict justice to himself, for his conscience having long ago outgrown the perception of his own inhumanity, now only felt compunction when death or the occasional insolvency of a security defeated his rapacity.

When Bartle entered, Fardoroughia and he surveyed each other with perfect coolness for nearly half a minute, during which time neither uttered a word. The silence was first broken by Honor, who put forward a chair, and asked Flanagan to sit down.

"Sit down, Bartle," said she, "sit down, boy; an' how is all the family?"

"Deed, can't complain," replied Bartle, "as times goes; an' how are you, Fardorougha? although I needn't ax, you're takin' care of number *one*, any how, what you always did."

"I'm middlin', Bartle, middlin'; as well as a man can be that has his heart broke every day in the year, strivin' to come by his own, an' can't do it; but I'm a fool, an' ever was—sarvin' others an' ruinin' myself."

"Bartle," said Mrs. Donovan, "are you unwell, dear? you look as pale as death. Let me get you a drink of fresh milk."

"If he's weak," said Fardorougha, "an' he looks weak, a drink of fresh wather 'ud be betther for him; ever an' always a drink of wather for a weak man, or a weak woman aither; it recovers them sooner."

"Thank you, kindly, Mrs. Donovan, an' I'm obliged to you, Fardorougha, for the wather; but I'm not a bit weak; it's only the heat o' the day ails me—for sure enough it's broilin' weather."

"'Deed it is," replied Honor, "killin' weather to them that has to be out undher it."

"If it's good for nothin' else, it's good for the hay-makin'," observed Fardorougha.

"I'm tould, Misther Donovan," said Bartle, "that you want a sarvint man; now, if you do, I want a place, an' you see I'm comin' to you to look for one."

"Heaven above, Bartle," exclaimed Honor, "what do you mane? is it one of Dan Flanagan's sons goin' to sarvice?"

"Not one, but all o' them," replied the other, coolly, "an' his daughters too, Mrs. Donovan; but it's all the way o' the world. If Misther Donovan 'ill hire me, I'll thank him."

"Don't be *Mistherin'* me, Bartle; Misther them that has manes an' substance," returned Donovan.

"Oh God forgive you, Fardorougha," exclaimed his

honest and humane wife ; “ God forgive you ! Bartle, from my heart, from the core o’ my heart I pity you, my poor boy. An’ is it to this Fardoroughia you’ve brought them ?—O Saviour o’ the world ? ”

She fixed her eyes upon the victim of her husband’s extortion, and in an instant they were filled with tears.

“ What did I do,” said the latter, “ but strive to recover my own ? How could I afford to lose forty pounds ? An’ I was tould for sartin that your father knew Grehan was goin’ to Ameriky when he got him to go security. Whisht, Honor, you’re as foolish a woman as riz this day ; havn’t you your sins to cry for ? ”

“ God knows I have, Fardoroughia, an’ more than my own to cry for.”

“ I dar say you did hear as much,” said Bartle, quietly replying to the observation of Fardoroughia respecting his father ; “ but you know it’s folly to talk about spilt milk. If you want a sarvint I’ll hire ; for, as I said a while ago, I want a place, an’ except wid you I don’t know where to get one.”

“ If you come to me,” observed the other, “ you must go to your duty, an’ obsarve the *fast* days—but not the holidays.”

“ Sarvints isn’t oblaged to obsarve the fast days,” replied Bartle.

“ But I always put it in the bargain,” returned the other.

“ As to that,” said Bartle, “ I don’t much mind it. Sure it’ll be for the good o’ my sowl, any way. But what wages will you be givin’ ? ”

“ Thirty shillins every half-year ;—that’s three pounds,—sixty shillins a-year. A great deal of money.—I’m sure I dunna where it’s to come from.”

“ It’s very little for a year’s hard labour,” replied Bartle ; “ but little as it is, Fardoroughia, owin’ to what has happened betwixt us, believe me—an’ you *may* believe me—I’m right glad to take it.”

"Well, but Bartle, you know there's fifteen shillins of the ould account still due, an' you must allow it out o' your wages; if you don't, it's no bargain."

Bartle's face became livid; but he was perfectly cool; indeed so much so that he smiled at this last condition of Fardorougha. It was a smile, however, so ghastly, dark, and frightful, that by any person capable of tracing the secret workings of some deadly passion on the countenance, its purport could not have been mistaken.

"God knows, Fardorougha, you might let *that* pass,—consider that you've been hard enough upon us."

"God knows I say the same," observed Honor. "Is it the last drop o' the heart's blood you want to squeeze out, Fardorougha?"

"The last drop! What is it but my right? Am I robbing him? Isn't it due? Will he, or can he deny *that*? An' if it's due, isn't it but honest in him to pay it? They're not livin' can say *I* ever defrauded them of a penny. I never broke a bargain, an' yet you open upon me, Honor, as if I was a rogue! If I hadn't that boy below to provide for, an' settle in the world, what 'ud I care about money? It's for *his* sake I look afther my right."

"I'll allow the money," said Bartle. "Fardorougha's right; it's due, an' I'll pay him—ay will I, Fardorougha, settle wid you to the last farden, or beyant it, if you like."

"I wouldn't take a farden beyant it, in the shape of debt. Them that's decent enough to make a present—may,—for that's a horse of another colour."

"When will I come home!" inquired Bartle.

"You may stay at home, now that you're here," said the other. "An' in the mane time, go an' help Connor to put that hay in lap-cocks. Any thing you want to bring here you can bring afther your day's work to-night."

"Did you ate your dinner, Bartle," said Honor; "bekase if you didn't I'll get you something."

"It's not to this time o' day he'd be without his dinner, I suppose," observed his ~~knew~~ master.

"You're very right, Fardoroughia," rejoined Bartle; "I'm thankful to you, ma'am, I did ate my dinner."

"Well, you'll get a rake in the barn, Bartle," said his master; "an' now tramp down to Connor, an' I'll see how you'll handle yourselves, both o' you, from this till night."

Bartle accordingly proceeded towards the meadow, and Fardoroughia, as was his custom, throwing his great coat loosely about his shoulders, the arms dangling on each side of him, proceeded to another part of his farm.

Flanagan's step, on his way to join Connor, was slow and meditative. The kindness of the son and mother touched him; for the line between their disposition and Fardoroughia's was too strong and clear to allow the slightest suspicion of their participation in the spirit which regulated his life. The father, however, had just declared that his anxiety to accumulate money arose from a wish to settle his son independently in life; and Flanagan was too slightly acquainted with human character to see through this flimsy apology for extortion. He took it for granted that Fardoroughia spoke truth, and his resolution received a bias from the impression, which, however, his better nature determined to subdue. In this uncertain state of mind he turned about almost instinctively, to look in the direction which Fardoroughia had taken, and as he observed his diminutive figure creeping along, with his great coat about him, he felt that the very sight of the man who had broken up their hearth and scattered them on the world, filled his heart with a deep and deadly animosity that occasioned him to pause as a person would do who finds himself unexpectedly upon the brink of a precipice.

Connor, on seeing him enter the meadow with the

ake, knew at once that the terms had been concluded between them; and the excellent young man's heart was deeply moved at the destitution which forced Flanagan to seek for service with the very individual who had occasioned it.

"I see, Bartle," said he, "you have agreed."

"We have," replied Bartle. "But if there had been any other place to be got in the parish—(an' indeed only for the state I'm in)—I wouldn't have hired myself to him for nothing, or for next to nothing, as I have done."

"Why, what did he promise?"

"Three pounds a year, an' out o' that I'm to pay him fifteen shillins that my father owes him still."

"Close enough, Bartle, but don't be cast down; I'll undertake that my mother an' I will double it,—an' as for the fifteen shillins I'll pay them out o' my own pocket—when I get money. I needn't tell you that we're all kept upon the tight crub, and that little cash goes far with us; for all that, we'll do what I promise, go as it may."

"It's more than I ought to expect, Connor; but yourself and your mother, all the country would put their hands undher both your feets."

"I would give a great dale, Bartle, that my poor father had a little of the feelin' that's in my mother's heart; but it's his way, Bartle, an' you know he's my father, an' has been kinder to me than to any livin' creature on this earth. I never got a harsh word from him yet. An' if he kept me stinted in many things that I was entitled to as well as other persons like me, still, Bartle, he loves me, an' I can't but feel great affection for him, love the money as he may."

This was spoken with much seriousness of manner, not unmingled with somewhat of regret, if not of sorrow. Bartle fixed his eyes upon the fine face of his companion, with a look in which there was a character of compassion. His countenance, however, while he

gazed on him, maintained its natural colour—it was not pale.

“I am sorry, Connor,” said he slowly, “I am sorry that I hired wid your father.”

“An’ I’m glad of it,” replied the other; “why should you be sorry?”

Bartle made no answer for some time, but looked into the ground as if he had not heard him.

“Why should you be sorry, Bartle?”

Nearly a minute elapsed before his abstraction was broken. “What’s that?” said he at length: “What were you askin’ me?”

“You said you were sorry.”

“Oh ay!” returned the other, interrupting him; “but I didn’t mind what I was sayin’: ’twas thinkin’ o’ somethin’ else I was—of home, Bartle, an’ what we’re brought to; but the best way’s to dhrop all discourse about that for ever.”

“You’ll be my friend if you do,” said Connor.

“I will, then,” replied Bartle: “we’ll change it. Connor, were you ever in love?”

O’Donovan turned quickly about, and, with a keen glance at Bartle, replied—

“Why, I don’t know: I believe I might, once or so.”

“*I am*,” said Flanagan bitterly; “*I am*, Connor.”

“An’ who’s the happy crature, will you tell us?”

“No,” returned the other; “but if there’s a wish that I’d make against my worst enemy, ’twould be, that he might love a girl above his manes; or if he was her aquil, or even near her aquil, that he might be brought”——he paused, but immediately proceeded, “Well, no matter; I am indeed, Connor.”

“An’ is the girl fond o’ you?”

“I don’t know; my mind was made up to tell her; but it’s past that now; I know she’s wealthy and proud both, and so is all her family.”

“How do you no she’s proud when you never put the subject to her?”

"I'm not sayin' she's proud in one sinse; wid respect to herself, I believe she's humble enough; I mane, she dosen't give herself many airs, but her people's as proud as the very sarra, an' never match below them; still, if I'd opportunities of bein' often in her company, I'd not fear to trust to a sweet tongue for comin' round her."

"Never despair, Bartle," said Connor; "you know the old proverb, 'a faint heart;' however settin' the purty crature aside, whoever she is, I think if we divided ourselves—you to that side, and me to this—we'd get this hay lapp'd in half the time; or do you take which side you plase."

"It's a bargain," said Bartle; "I don't care a trawneen: I'll stay where I am, thin, an' do you go beyant: let us hurry, too, for if I'm not mistaken, it's too sultry to be long without rain; the sky, too, is gettin' dark."

"I obsarved as much myself," said Connor; "an' that was what made me spake."

Both then continued their labour with redoubled energy, nor ceased for a moment until the task was executed, and the business of the day concluded.

Flanagan's observation was indeed correct, as to the change in the day and the appearance of the sky. From the hour of five o'clock the darkness gradually deepened, until a dead black shadow, fearfully still and solemn, wrapped the whole horizon. The sun had altogether disappeared, and nothing was visible in the sky but one unbroken mass of darkness, unrelieved even by a single pile of clouds. The animals, where they could, had betaken themselves to shelter; the fowls of the air sought the covert of the hedges, and ceased their songs; the larks fled from the mid heaven; and occasionally might be seen a straggling bee hurrying homewards, careless of the flowers which tempted him in his path, and only anxious to reach his hive before the deluge should overtake him. The stillness indeed was awful, as was the gloomy veil which darkened the face of nature,

and filled the mind with that ominous terror which presses upon the heart like a consciousness of guilt. In such a time, and under the aspect of a sky so much resembling the pall of death, there is neither mirth nor laughter, but that individuality of apprehension, which, whilst it throws the conscience in upon its own records, and suspends conversation, yet draws man to his fellows, as if mere contiguity were a safeguard against danger.

The conversation between the two young men as they returned from their labour, was short but expressive.

"Bartle," said Connor, "are you afearid of thundher? The rason I ax," he added, "is, because your face is as white as a sheet."

"I have it from my mother," replied Flanagan; "but at all evints such an evenin' as this is enough to make the heart of any man quake."

"I feel my spirits low, by rason of the darkness, but I'm not afraid. It's well for them that have a clear conscience: they say, that a stormy sky is the face of an angry God"——

"An' the thundher his voice," added Bartle: "but why are the brute bastes an' the birds afraid, that commit no sin?"

"That's thrue," said his companion; "it must be natural to be afraid, or why would *they* indeed?—but some people are naturally more timersome than others."

"I intinded to go home for my other clo'es an' linen this evenin'," observed Bartle, "but I won't go out to night."

"I must thin," said Connor; "an', with the blessin' o' God, will too, come what may."

"Why, what is there to bring you out, if it's a fair question to ax?" inquired the other.

"A promise for one thing; an' my own inclination—my own heart, that's nearer the truth—for another. It's the first meetin' that I an' her I'm goin' to ever had."

"*Thighum, Thighum*, I undherstand," said Flanagan: "well, I'll stay at home; but, sure it's no harm to wish

you success—an' that, Connor, is more than *I'll* ever have where I wish for it most."

This closed their dialogue, and both entered Far-dorougha's house in silence.

Up until twilight the darkness of the dull and heavy sky was unbroken; but towards the west there was seen a streak whose colour could hardly be determined either as that of blood or fire. By its angry look, it seemed as if the sky in that quarter were about to burst forth in one awful sweep of conflagration. Connor observed it, and very correctly anticipated the nature and consequence of its appearance; but what will not youthful love dare and overcome? With an undismayed heart he set forward on his journey, which we leave him to pursue, and beg permission, meanwhile, to transport the reader to a scene distant about two miles farther towards the inland part of the country.

CHAPTER IV.

THE dwelling of Bodagh Buie O'Brien, to which Connor is now directing his steps, was a favourable specimen of that better class of farm-houses inhabited by our more extensive and wealthy agriculturists. It was a large, whitewashed, ornamentally thatched building, that told by its external aspect of the good living, extensive comfort, and substantial opulence which prevailed within. Stretched before its hall-door was a small lawn, bounded on the left by a wall that separated it from the farm-yard into which the kitchen-door opened. Here were stacks of hay, oats, and wheat, all upon an immense scale, both as to size and number; together with thrashing and winnowing machines, improved ploughs, carts, cars, and all the other modern implements of an extensive farm. Very cheering, indeed, was the din of industry that arose from the clank of machinery, the grunting of hogs, the cackling of geese, the quacking of ducks, and all the various other sounds which proceeded from what at first sight might have appeared to be rather a scene of confusion, but which, on closer inspection, would be found a rough yet well-regulated system, in which every person had an allotted duty to perform.

Here might Bodagh Buie be seen, dressed in a grey broad-cloth coat, drab kerseymere breeches, and lamb's wool stockings, moving from place to place with that calm, sedate, and contented air, which betokens an easy mind, and a consciousness of possessing a more than ordinary share of property and influence. With hands thrust into his small-clothes pockets, and a bunch of gold seals suspended from his fob, he issued his orders in a grave and quiet tone, differing very little in his dress from an absolute *Squireen*, save in the fact of his Caroline hat being rather scuffed, and his strong shoes begrimed with the soil of his fields or farm-yard.

Mrs. O'Brien was, out of the sphere of her own family, a person of much greater pretensions than the Bodagh her husband; and, though in a different manner, not less so in the discharge of her duty as a wife, a mother, or a mistress. In appearance, she was a large, fat, good-looking woman, eternally in a state of motion and bustle, and as her education had been extremely scanty, her tone and manner, though brimful of authority and consequence, were strongly marked with that ludicrous vulgarity which is produced by the attempt of an ignorant person to accomplish a high style of gentility. She was a kind-hearted, charitable woman, however; but so inveterately conscious of her station in life, that it became in her opinion a matter of duty to exhibit a refinement and elevation of language suitable to a matron who could drive every Sunday to Mass on her own jaunting-car. When dressed on these occasions in her rich rustling silks, she had, what is called in Ireland, a comfortable *flaghoola* look, but at the same time a carriage so stiff and rustic, as utterly overcame all her attempts, dictated as they were by the simplest vanity, at enacting the arduous and awful character of a *Squireen's* wife.

Their family consisted of a son and daughter. The former, a young man of a very amiable disposition, was, at the present period of our story, a student in Maynooth College; and the latter, now in her nineteenth year, a promising pupil in a certain seminary for young ladies, conducted by that notorious Master of Arts, Little Cupid. Oona, or Una O'Brien, was in truth a most fascinating and beautiful *brunette*; tall in stature, light and agile in all her motions, cheerful and sweet in temper, but with just as much of that winning caprice, as was necessary to give zest and piquancy to her whole character. Though tall and slender, her person was by no means thin; on the contrary, her limbs and figure were very gracefully rounded, and gave promise of that agreeable fulness, beneath or beyond which no perfect model of female proportion can exist. If our

readers could get one glance at the hue of her rich cheek, or fall for a moment under the power of her black mellow eye, or witness the beauty of her white teeth, while her face beamed with a profusion of dimples, or saw her while in the act of shaking out her *invincible locks*, ere she bound them up with her white and delicate hands—then indeed might they understand why no war of the elements could prevent Connor O'Donovan from risking life and limb sooner than disappoint her in the promise of this their *first* meeting.

Oh, that first meeting of pure and youthful love! with what a glory is it ever encircled in the memory of the human heart? No matter how long or how melancholy the lapse of time since its past existence may be, still, still is it remembered by our feelings when the recollection of every tie but itself has departed.

The charm, however, that murmured its many-toned music through the soul of Una O'Brien was not, upon the evening in question, wholly free from a shade of melancholy for which she could not account; and this impression did not result from any previous examination of her love for Connor O'Donovan, though many such she had. She knew that in this, the utmost opposition from both her parents must be expected; nor was it the consequence of a consciousness on her part, that in promising him a clandestine meeting, she had taken a step which could not be justified. Of this, too, she had been aware before; but, until the hour of appointment drew near, the heaviness which pressed her down was such as caused her to admit that the sensation, however painful and gloomy, was new to her, and bore a character distinct from any thing that could proceed from the various lights in which she had previously considered her attachment. This was, however, heightened by the boding aspect of the heavens and the dread repose of the evening, so unlike any thing she had ever witnessed before. Notwithstanding all this, she was sustained by the eager and impatient buoyancy of first affection;

which, when her imagination pictured the handsome form of her young and manly lover, predominated for the time over every reflection and feeling that was opposed to itself. Her mind indeed resembled a fair autumn landscape, over which the cloud shadows may be seen sweeping for a moment, while again the sun comes out and turns all into serenity and light.

The place appointed for their interview, was a small paddock, shaded by alders, behind her father's garden, and thither, with trembling limbs and a palpitating heart did the young and graceful daughter of Bodagh Buie proceed.

For a considerable time, that is to say, for three long years before this delicious appointment, had Connor O'Donovan and Una been wrapped in the Elysium of mutual love. At mass, at fair, and at market, had they often and often met, and as frequently did their eyes search each other out, and reveal in long blushing glances the state of their respective hearts. Many a time did he seek an opportunity to disclose what he felt, and as often with confusion, and fear, and delight, did she afford him what he sought. Thus did one opportunity after another pass away, and as often did he form the towering resolution to reveal his affection if he were ever to be favoured with another. Still would some disheartening reflection, arising from the uncommon gentleness and extreme modesty of his character, throw a damp upon his spirits; he questioned his own penetration; perhaps she was in the habit of glancing as much at others as she glanced at him. Could it be possible that the beautiful daughter of Bodagh Buie—he the wealthiest man, and his wife the proudest woman, within a large circle of the country, would love the son of Fardorougha Donovan, whose name had, alas, become so odious and unpopular? But then the blushing face, the dark lucid eyes, and the long earnest glance rose before his imagination, and told him that, let the difference in the character and station of their

parents be what it might, the fair dark daughter of O'Brien was not insensible to him, nor to the anxieties he felt.

The circumstances which produced the first conversation they ever had, arose from an incident of a very striking and singular character. About a week before the evening in question, one of Bodagh Buie's bee-hive's swarmed, and the young colony, though closely watched and pursued, directed their course to Fardorougha's house, and settled in the mouth of the chimney. Connor, having got a clean sheet, secured them, and was about to commit them to the care of the Bodagh's servants, when it was suggested that the duty of bringing them home devolved on himself, inasmuch as he was told they would not remain, unless placed in a new hive by the hands of the person on whose property they had settled. While on his way to the Bodagh's he was accosted in the following words by one of O'Brien's servants:

"Connor, there's good luck before you, or the bees wouldn't pick *you* out among all the rest o' the neighbours—you ought to hould up your head, man, who knows what manin's in it?"*

"Why, do *you* b'lieve that bees settlin' wid one is a sign o' good luck?"

"Surely I do; doesn't every one know it to be throe? Connor, you're a good-lookin' fellow, an' I need scarcely tell you that we have a purty girl at home; can you lay that and that together? Arrah, by my sowl, the richest honey ever the same bees 'll make, is nothin' but alloways,† compared wid that purty mouth of her own! A honey-comb is a fool to it."

"Why, did you ever thry, Mike?"

"Is it me? Och, Och, if I was only high enough in this world, maybe I wouldn't be spakin' sweet to her;

* The settling of bees upon any house is, in Ireland, considered to be an omen of good fortune.

† Aloes.

no, no, be my word! thry indeed for the likes o' me! Faith, but I know a sartin young man that she does be often spakin' about."

Connor's heart was in a state of instant commotion.

"An' who—who is *he*—who is that sartin young man, Mike?"

"Faith, the son o' one that can run a shillin' farther than e'er another man in the county. Do you happen to be acquaint wid one Connor O'Donovan, of Lisnamona?"

"Connor O'Donovan—that's good Mike—in the mane time don't be goin' it on us. No, no;—an' even if she did, it isn't to *you* she'd spake about any one, Michael ahagur?"

"No, nor it wasn't to me—sure I didn't say it was—but don't you know my sisther's at sarvice in the Bodagh's family? Divil a word o' falsity I'm tellin' you—so, if you haven't the heart to spake for yourself, I wouldn't give knots o' straws for you; and now, there's no harm done, I hope—moreover, an' by the same token you needn't go to the throuble o' puttin' up an advertisement to let the parish know what I've tould you."

"Hut, tut, Mike, it's all folly. Una Dhun O'Brien to think o' *me*! nonsense, man; that cock would never fight."

"Very well; divil a morsel of us is forcin' you to believe it. I suppose the mother o' you has your *wooden spoon* to the fore still. I'd kiss the Bravery* you didn't come into the world wid a *silver ladle* in your mouth, anyhow. In the mane time, we're at the Bodagh's—so have an eye about you afther what you've heard—*Nabocklish*!"

This, indeed, was important intelligence to Connor, and it is probable that had he not heard it, another opportunity of disclosing his passion might have been lost.

* Breviary.

Independently of this, however, he was not proof against the popular superstition of the bees, particularly as it appeared to be an augury to which his enamoured heart could cling with all the hope of young and passionate enthusiasm.

Nor was it long till he had an opportunity of perceiving that she whose image had floated in light before his fancy, gave decided manifestations of being struck by the same significant occurrence. On entering the garden, the first person his eye rested on was Una herself, who, as some of the other hives were expected to swarm, had been engaged watching them during the day. His appearance at any time would have created a tumult in her bosom, but, in addition to this, when she heard that the bees which had rested on Connor's house, had swarmed from *her own hive*, to use the words of Burns—

“She looked—she reddened like the rose,
Syne pale as ony lily;”

and with a shy but expressive glance at Connor, said in a low hurried voice: “these belong *to me*.”

Until the moment we are describing, Connor and she, notwithstanding that they had frequently met in public places, had never yet spoken; nor could the words now uttered by Una be considered addressed to him, although from the glance that accompanied them it was sufficiently evident that they were designed for him alone. It was in vain that he attempted to accost her, his confusion, his pleasure, his timidity, seemed to unite in rendering him incapable of speaking at all. His lips moved several times, but the thoughts, as they arose, died away unspoken.

At this moment, Mike, with waggish good humour, and in a most laudable fit of industry, reminded the other servants who had been assisting to secure the bees, that as they (the bees) were now safe, no farther necessity existed for their presence.

"Come, boys—death alive, the day's passin'—only think, Miss Una, that we have all the hay in the Long-shot meadow to get into cocks yet, an' here we're idlin' an' gosterin' away our time like I dunna what. They're schamin', Miss Una—divil a thing else, an' what'll the masther say if the same meadow's not finished to-night?"

"Indeed, Mike," replied Una; "if the meadow is to be finished this night, there's little time to be lost."

"Come, boys," exclaimed Mike, "you hear what Miss Una says—if it's to be finished to-night there's little time to be lost—turn out—march. Miss Una can watch the bees widout our help. Good evenin', Mither Donovan; be my word but you're entitled to a taste o' *honey* any way, for bringin' back Miss Una's bees to her."

Mike, after having uttered this significant opinion relative to his sense of justice, drove his fellow servants out of the garden, and left the lovers together. There was now a dead silence, during the greater part of which neither dared to look at the other—at length each hazarded a glance, their eyes met, and their embarrassments deepened in a tenfold degree. Una, on withdrawing her gaze, looked with an air of perplexity from one object to another, and at length, with downcast lids, and glowing cheeks, her eyes became fixed on her own white and delicate finger—

"Who would think," said she, in a voice tremulous with agitation, "that the sting of a bee could be so painful?"

Connor advanced towards her with a beating heart, "Where have you been stung, Miss O'Brien?" said he, in a tone shaken out of its fulness by what he felt.

"In the finger," she replied, and she looked closely into the spot as she uttered the words.

"Will you let me see it?" asked Connor.

She held her hand towards him without knowing what she did, nor was it till after a strong effort that Connor

mastered himself so far as to ask her in which finger she felt the pain. In fact, both saw at once that their minds were engaged upon far different thoughts, and that their anxiety to pour out the full confession of their love was equally deep and mutual.

As Connor put the foregoing question to her, he took her hand in his.

"In what finger!" she replied, "I don't—indeed—I—I believe in the—the—but what—what is this?—I am very—very weak."

"Let me support you to the summer-house, where you can sit," returned Connor, still clasping her soft delicate hand in his; then circling her slender waist with the other, he helped her to a seat under the thick shade of the osiers.

Una's countenance immediately became pale as death, and her whole frame trembled excessively.

"You are too weak even to sit without support," said Connor, "your head is droopin'. For God's sake lean it over on me. Oh, I'd give ten thousand lives to have it on my breast only for one moment."

Her paleness still continued; she gazed on him, and as he gently squeezed her hand, a slight pressure was given in return. He then drew her head over upon his shoulder, where it rather fell than leaned; a gush of tears came from her eyes, and the next moment, with sobbing hearts, they were encircled in each other's arms.

From this first intoxicating draught of youthful love, they were started by the voice of Mrs. O'Brien calling upon her daughter, and, at the same time, to their utter dismay, they observed the portly dame sailing, in her usual state, down towards the harbour, with an immense bunch of keys dangling from her side.

"Oonagh, Miss—Miss Oonagh—where are you Miss, ma colleen?—Here's a littler," she proceeded, when Una appeared, "from Mrs. Fogarty, your school-mistress, to yer fadher—statin' that she wants you to finish your Jiggraphy at the dancin', wid a new dancin'-

tacher from *Dubling*. Why—Eah! what ails you, Miss, ma colleen? What the dickens wor you cryin' for?"

"These nasty bees that stung me," returned the girl; "oh, for goodness sake, mother dear, don't come any farther, except you wish to have a whole hive upon you!"

"Why, sure, they wouldn't sting any one that won't meddle wid them," replied the mother in a kind of alarm.

"The sorra pin they care, mother—don't come near them; I'll be in, by an' by—where's my father?"

"He's in the house, an' wants you to answer Mrs. Fogarty, statin' fedher you'll take a month's larnin' on the *flure** or not."

"Well, I'll see her letter in a minute or two, but you may tell my father he needn't wait—I won't answer it to-night, at all events."

"You must answer it on the nail," replied her mother, "becase the messenger's waitin' in the kitching 'ithin."

"That alters the case altogether," returned Una, "and I'll follow you immediately."

The good woman then withdrew, having once more enjoined the daughter to avoid delay, and not detain the messenger.

"You must go instantly," said she to Connor; "oh, what would happen me if they knew that I lov—that I—" a short pause ensued, and she blushed deeply.

"Say what you were goin' to say," returned Connor; "oh, say *that one word*, and all the misfortunes that ever happened to man can't make me unhappy! Oh God an' is it possible! Say that word—oh! say it—say it!"

"Well then," she continued, "if they knew that *I love* the son of Fardorougha Donovan, what would

* Dancing.

become of me? Now, go for fear my father may come out."

"But when will I see you, again?"

"Go," said she, anxiously; "go, you can easily see me."

"But when?—when? say on Thursday."

"Not so soon—not so soon," and she cast an anxious eye towards the garden-gate.

"When then?—say this day week."

"Very well—but go—maybe my father has heard from the servants that you are here."

"Dusk is the best time."

"Yes—yes—about dusk; under the alders, in the little green field behind the garden."

"Show me the wounded finger," said he with a smile, "before I go."

"There," said she, extending her hand; "but for heaven's sake go."

"I'll tell you how to cure it," said he, tenderly; "honey is the medicine; put that sweet finger to your own sweeter lip—and, afterwards, I'll carry home the wound."

"But not the medicine, *now*," said she, and snatching her hand from his, with light fearful steps, she fled up the garden and disappeared.

Such, gentle reader, were the circumstances which brought our young and artless lovers together, in the black twilight of the singularly awful and ominous evening which we have already described.

Connor, on reaching the appointed spot, sat down; but his impatience soon overcame him; and while hurrying to and fro, under the alders, he asked himself in what was this wild but rapturous attachment to terminate? That the proud *Bodagh Buie*,* and his prouder wife, would never suffer their beautiful daughter, the heiress of all their wealth, to marry the son of

* Bodagh Buie—literally the "Yellow Churl."

Fardorougha the miser, was an axiom, the truth of which pressed upon his heart with a deadly weight. On the other hand, would his father, or rather could he, change his nature so far as to establish him in life, provided Una and he were united without the consent of her parents. Alas! he knew his father's parsimony too well; and, on either hand he was met by difficulties that appeared to him to be insurmountable. But again, came the delightful and ecstatic consciousness that let their parents act as they might, Una's heart and his were bound to each other by ties, which, only to think of, was rapture. In the midst of these reflections, he heard her light foot approach, but with a step more slow and melancholy than he could have expected from the ardour of their love.

When she approached, the twilight was just sufficient to enable him to perceive that her face was pale, and tinged apparently with melancholy, if not with sorrow. After the first salutations were over, he was proceeding to inquire into the cause of her depression, when, to his utter surprise, she placed her hands upon her face, and burst into a fit of grief.

Those who have loved need not be told that the most delightful office of that delightful passion is to dry the tears of the beloved one who is dear to us beyond all things else that life contains. Connor literally performed this office, and inquired, in a tone so soothing and full of sympathy, why she wept? that her tears for a while only flowed the faster. At length her grief abated, and she was able to reply to him—

“You ask me why I am crying,” said the fair young creature; “but indeed I cannot tell you. There has been a sinking of the heart upon me during the greater part of this day. When I thought of our meeting I was delighted, but again some heaviness would come over me that I can't account for.”

“I know what it is,” replied Connor, “a very

simple thing; merely the terrible calm and blackness of the evenin'. I was sunk myself a little."

"I ought to cry for a better reason," she returned; "in meeting you I have done—an' am doing—what I ought to be sorry for—that is a wrong action that my conscience condemns."

"There is nobody perfect, my dear Una," said Connor; "an' none without their failin's; they have little to answer for that have no more than you."

"Don't flatter me," she replied; "if you love me as you say, never flatter me while you live; I will always speak what I feel, and I hope *you'll* do the same."

"If I could spake what I feel," said he, "you would still say I flattered you—it's not in the power of any words that ever were spoken, to tell how I love you—how much my heart an' soul's fixed upon you. Little you know, my own dear Una, how unhappy I am this minute, to see you in low spirits—what do you think is the occasion of it? Spake now, as you say you will do, that is, as you feel."

"Except it be that *my heart* brought me to meet you to-night contrary to *my conscience*, I do not know; Connor, Connor, that heart is so strongly in your favour, that if *you* were not to be happy neither could its poor owner."

Connor for a moment looked into the future, but like the face of the sky above him, all was either dark or stormy; his heart sank, but the tenderness expressed in Una's last words filled his whole soul with a vehement and burning passion which he felt must regulate his destiny in life, whether for good or evil. He pulled her to his breast, on which he placed her head; she looked up fondly to him, and perceiving that he wrought under some deep and powerful struggle, said in a low confiding voice, whilst the tears once more ran quietly down her cheeks,

"Connor, what I said is true."

“My heart’s burnin’—my heart’s burnin’,” he exclaimed, “it’s not love I feel for you, Una—it’s more than love; oh, what is it? Una, Una, this I know, that I cannot long live without you, or from you; if I did I’d go wild or mad through the world. For the last three years you have never been out of my mind, I may say, awake or asleep; for I believe a night never passed during that time that I didn’t dreme of you—of the beautiful young crature; oh! God in heaven, can it be thrue that she loves me at last. Say them blessed words again, Una; oh say them again; but I’m too happy—I can hardly bear this delight.”

“It is true that I love you, and if our parents could think as we do, Connor, how easy would it be for them to make us happy, but”——

“It’s too soon, Una; it’s too soon to spake of that. Happy? don’t we love one another? Isn’t that happiness? who or what can deprive us of that? We are happy without them; we can be happy in spite of them; oh, my own fair girl; sweet life of my life, and heart of my heart; heaven—heaven itself would be no heaven to me, if you weren’t with me!”

“Don’t say that, Connor dear; it’s wrong; let us not forget what is due to religion, if we expect our love to prosper. You may think this strange from one that has acted contrary to religion in coming to meet you against the will and knowledge of her parents; but beyond that, dear Connor, I hope I will never go. But is it true, that you’ve loved me so long?”

“It is,” said he, “the second Sunday in May next was three years, I knelt opposite you at Mass. You were on the left hand side of the althar, I was on the right; my eyes were never off you; indeed you may remember it.”

“I have good right,” said she, blushing and hiding her face on his shoulder. “I ought to be ashamed to acknowledge it, and me so young at the time; little more than sixteen. From that day to this, my story

has been just your own. Connor, can you tell me how I found it out, but I *knew* you loved me?

"Many a thing was to tell you that, Una dear; sure my eyes were never off you, whenever you wor near me, an' wherever you were, there was I certain to be too. I never missed any public place if I thought you would be at it, an' that merely for the sake of seein' you; an now will you tell me why it was that I could 'a sworn *you loved me*?"

"You have answered for us both," she replied; "as for me, if I only chanced to hear your name mentioned, my heart would beat; if the talk was about you I could listen to nothing else, and I often felt the colour come and go on my cheek."

"Una, I never thought I could be born to such happiness. Now that I know you love me, I can hardly think it was love I felt for you all along; it's wonderful—it's wonderful."

"What's wonderful?" she inquired.

"Why, the change that I feel since knowin' that you love me; since I had it from *your own lips*, it has overcome me—I'm a child—I'm any thing, any thing you choose to make me—it was never love—it's only since I found you loved me that my heart's burnin' as it is."

"I'll make you happy if I can," she replied, "and keep you so, I hope."

"There's one thing that will make me still happier than I am," said Connor.

"What is it? if it's proper and right I'll do it."

"Promise me that if I live, you'll never marry one else than me."

"You wish then to have the promise all on one side," she replied with a smile and a blush, each as sweet as ever captivated a human heart.

"No, no, no, my darling Una, *acushla gra gal machree*, no; I'll promise the same to you."

She paused, and a silence of nearly a minute ensued.

"I don't know that it's right, Connor; I have taken one wrong step as it is, but, much as I love you, I won't take another; whatever I do I must feel that it's proper. I'm not sure that this is."

"Don't you say you love me, Una?"

"I do; you know I do."

"I have only another question to ask; could you, or would you, love me as you do, an' marry another?"

"I could not, Connor, and would not, and will not. I *am* ready to promise; I may easily do it; for God knows the very thought of marrying another, or being deprived of you, is more than I can bear."

"Well, then," returned her lover, seizing her hand; "I take God to witness that whilst you are alive an' faithful to me, I will never marry any woman but yourself. Now," he continued, "put your right hand into mine, and say the same words."

She did so, and was in the act of repeating the form, "I take God to witness——," when a vivid flash of lightning shot from the darkness above them, and a peal of thunder almost immediately followed with an explosion so loud as nearly to stun both. Una started with terror, and instinctively withdrew her hand from Connor's.

"God preserve us," she exclaimed, "that's awful. Connor, I feel as if the act I am goin' to do, is not right. Let us put it off, at all events, till another time."

"Is it because there comes an accidental brattle of thunder?" he returned. "Why the thunder would come if we were never to change a promise. You have mine now, Una dear, and I'm sure you wouldn't wish me to be bound an' yourself free. Don't be afraid darling; give me your hand, an' don't tremble so; repeat the words at wanst, and let it be over."

He again took her hand, when she repeated the form in a distinct, though feeble voice, observing when it was concluded,—

"Now, Connor, I did this to satisfy you, but I still feel like one who has done a wrong action. I am yours now, but I can't help praying to God that it may end happily for us both."

"It must, darling Una—it must end happily for us both. How can it be otherwise? For my part, except to see you my wife, I couldn't be happier than I am this minute; exceptin' *that*, my heart has all it wished for. Is it possible! Oh! is it possible that this is not a dream, my heart's life—but if it is—if it is—I never more will wish to waken."

Her young lover was deeply affected as he uttered these words, nor was Una proof against the emotion they produced.

"I could pray to God this moment, with a purer heart than I ever had before," he proceeded, "for makin' my lot in life so happy. I feel that I am better and freer from sin than I ever was yet. If we're faithful and true to one another, what can the world do to us?"

"I couldn't be otherwise than faithful to you," she replied, "without being unhappy myself, and I trust it's no sin to love each other as we do. Now let us—God bless me, what a flash; an' here's the rain beginning. That thunder's dreadful; heaven preserve us! It's an awful night! Connor, you must see me as far as the corner of the garden; as for you, I wish you were safe at home."

"Hasten, dear," said he, "hasten; it's no night for you to be out in, now that the rain's coming; as for me, if it was ten times as dreadful, I won't feel it. There's but one thought—one thought in my mind, and that I wouldn't part with for the wealth of the universe."

Both then proceeded at a quick pace until they reached the corner of the Bodagh's garden, where, with short but earnest reassurances of unalterable attachment, they took a tender and affectionate farewell.

CHAPTER V.

It is not often that the higher ranks can appreciate the moral beauty of love as it is experienced by those humbler classes to whom they deny the power of feeling it in its most refined and exalted character. For our parts we differ so much from them in this, that if we wanted to give an illustration of that passion in its purest and most delicate state, we would not seek for it in the saloon or the drawing-room, but among the green fields and smiling landscapes of rural life. The simplicity of humble hearts is more accordant with the unity of affection than any mind can be that is distracted by the competition of rival claims upon its gratification. We do not say that the votaries of rank and fashion are insensible to love; because how much soever they may be conversant with the artificial and unreal, still they are human, and must, to a certain extent, be influenced by a principle that acts wherever it can find a heart on which to operate. We say, however, that their love, when contrasted with that which is felt by the humble peasantry, is languid and sickly; neither so pure, nor so simple, nor so intense. Its associations in high life are unfavourable to the growth of a healthy passion; for what is the glare of a lamp, a twirl through the insipid mazes of the ball-room, or the unnatural distortions of the theatre, when compared to the rising of the summer sun, the singing of birds, the music of the streams, the joyous aspect of the varied landscape, the mountain, the valley, the lake, and a thousand other objects, each of which transmits to the peasant's heart, silently, and imperceptibly that subtle power which at once strengthens and purifies the passion? There is scarcely such a thing as solitude in the upper ranks, nor an opportunity of keeping the feelings unwasted, and the energies of the heart unspent by

the many vanities and petty pleasures with which fashion forces a compliance, until the mind falls from its natural dignity, into a habit of coldness and aversion to every thing but the circle of empty trifles in which it moves so giddily. But the enamoured youth who can retire to the beautiful solitude of the still glen to brood over the image of her he loves, and who, probably, sits under the very tree where his love was avowed and returned; he, we say, exalted with the fulness of his happiness, feels his heart go abroad in gladness upon the delightful objects that surround him, for every thing he looks upon is as a friend; his happy heart expands over the whole landscape; his eye glances to the sky; he thinks of the Almighty Being above him, and though without any capacity to analyze his own feelings—love—the love of some humble, plain, but modest girl—kindles by degrees into the sanctity and rapture of religion.

Let not our readers of rank, then, if any such may honour our pages with a perusal, be at all surprised at the expressions of Connor O'Donovan when, under the ecstatic power of love so pure and artless as that which bound his heart and Una's together, he exclaimed as he did, "*Oh, I could pray to God this moment, with a purer heart than ever I had before.*" Such a state of feeling among the people is neither rare nor anomalous, for, however the great ones and the wise ones of the world may be startled at our assertion, we beg to assure them that love and religion are more nearly related to each other than those who have never felt either in its truth and purity can imagine.

As Connor performed his journey home, the thunder-tempest pealed fearfully through the sky; and, though the darkness was deep and unbroken by any thing but the red flashes of lightning, yet, so strongly absorbed was his heart by the scene we have just related, that he arrived at his father's house scarcely conscious of the roar of elements which surrounded him.

The family had retired to bed when he entered, with the exception of his parents, who, having felt uneasy at his disappearance, were anxiously awaiting his return, and entering into fruitless conjectures concerning the cause of an absence so unusual.

"What," said the alarmed mother, "what in the world wide could keep him so long out, and on sich a tempest as is in it? God protect my boy from all harm and danger this fearful night! Oh, Fardorougha, what 'ud become of us if any thing happened *him*? As for me—my heart's wrapt up in him; widout our darlin' it 'ud break—break—Fardorougha."

"Hut, he's gone to some neighbour's, and can't come out till the storm is over; he'll soon be here, now that the tundher and lightnin's past."

"But did you ever think, Fardorougha, what 'ud become of you, what you'd do, or how you'd live, if any thing happened him? which the Almighty forbid this night and for ever! Could you live widout him?"

The old man gazed upon her like one who felt displeasure at having a contingency so painful forced upon his consideration. Without making any reply, however, he looked thoughtfully into the fire for some time, after which he rose up, and with a querulous and impatient voice, said—

"What's the use of thinkin' about sich things? Lose him! why would I lose him?—I couldn't lose him—I'd as soon lose my own life—I'd rather be dead at wanst than lose him."

"God knows your love for him is a quare love, Fardorougha," rejoined the wife; "you wouldn't give him a guinea if it 'ud save his life, or allow him even a few shillins now and then for pocket money, that he might be aquil to other young boys like him."

"No use, no use in that, except to bring him into drink, an' other bad habits; a poor way, Honor, of showin' one's love for him. If you had your will you'd spoil him; I'm keepin' whatsoever little shillins we've

scraped together to settle him dacently in life; but, indeed, that's time enough yet; he's too young to marry for some years to come, barrin' he got a fortune."

"Well, one thing, Fardorougha—if ever two people wor blessed in a good son, praised be God, we are that."

"We are, Honor, we are; there's not his aquil in the parish—achora machree, that he is. When I'm gone he'll know what I've done for him."

"Whin you're gone—why Saver of airth, sure you wouldn't keep him out of his—husth!—here he is God be thankied, poor boy, he's safe! Oh, thin, *vich no Hoiah*, Connor, jewel, were you out undher this terrible night?"

"Connor, avich machree," added the father, "you're lost. My hand to you if he's worth three hapuns; sthrip an' throw my cothamore about you, an' draw in to the fire; you're fairly lost."

"I'm worth two lost people yet" said Connor smiling; "mother did you ever see a pleasanter night?"

"Pleasant, Connor, darlin'; oh thin it's you may say so, I'm sure!"

"Father, you're a worthy,—only your cothamore's too scimpit for me. Faith, mother, although you think I'm jokin', the divil a one o' me is; a pleasanter night—a happier night I never spent. Father, you ought to be proud o' me, an' stretch out a bit with the cash; faith, I'm nothin' else than a fine handsome young fellow."

"Be my sowl an' he ought to be proud out of you, Connor, whether you're in airnest or not," observed the mother, "an' to stretch out wid the *arhighad** too if you want it."

"Folly on, Connor, folly on, your mother i'll back you, I'll go bail, say what you will; but sure you know all I have must be yours yet, acushla."

Connor now sat down, and his mother stirred up the

* Money.

fire, on which she placed additional fuel. After a little time his manner changed, and a shade of deep gloom fell upon his manly and handsome features. "I don't know," he at length proceeded, "that as we three are here together, I could do better than ask your advice upon what has happened to me to-night."

"Why, what has happened you, Connor?" said the mother alarmed; "plase God, no harm, I hope."

"Who else," added the father, "would you be guided by, if not by your mother an' myself?"

"No harm, dear mother," said Connor in reply to her; "harm! oh! mother, mother, if you knew it; an' as for what *you* say, father, it is right; what advice but my mother's and yours ought I ask?"

"An' God's too," added the mother.

An' my heart never was more *ris* to God than it was, an' is this night," replied their ingenuous boy.

"Well, but what has happened, Connor?" said his father; "if it's any thing where our advice can sarve you, of coorse we'll advise you for the best."

Connor, then, with a glowing heart, made them acquainted with the affection which subsisted between himself and Una O'Brien, and ended by informing them of the vow of marriage which they had that night solemnly pledged to each other.

"You both know her by sight," he added, "an' afther what I've sed, can you blame me for sayin' that I found this a pleasant an' a happy night?"

The affectionate mother's eyes filled with tears of pride and delight, on hearing that her handsome son was loved by the beautiful daughter of Bodagh Buie, and she could not help exclaming, in the enthusiasm of the moment.

"She's a purty girl—the purtiest indeed I ever laid my two livin' eyes upon, and by all accounts as good as shes' purty; but I say that face to face, you're as good, agra, ay," she continued addressing the husband, "an' as handsome, Fardorougha, as she is. God bless her,

any way, an' mark her to grace and happiness, *mo colleen dhas dhun.*"*

"He's no match for her," said the father, who had listened with an earnest face, and compressed lips to his son's narrative; "he's no match for her—by two hundre guineas."

Honor, when he uttered the previous part of his observation, looked upon him with a flash of indignant astonishment; but when he had concluded, her countenance fell back into its original expression. It was evident that, while she, with the feelings of a woman and a mother, instituted a parallel between their personal merits alone, the husband viewed their attachment through that calculating spirit which had regulated his whole life.

"You're thinkin' of her money now," she added; "but remimber, Fardorougha, that it wasn't born wid her. An' I hope, Connor, it's not for her money that you have any *grah*t for her?"

"You may swear that, mother; I love her little finger betther than all the money in the king's bank."

"Connor, avich, your mother has made a fool of you, or you wouldn't spake the nonsense you spoke this minute."

"My word to you, father, I'll take all the money I'll get; but what am I to do? Bodagh Buie an' his wife will never consent to allow her to marry me, I can tell you; an' if she marries me without their consent, you both know I have no way of supportin' her, except you, father, assist me."

"That won't be needful, Connor, you may manage them; they won't see her want; she's an *only* daughter; they *couldn't* see her want."

"An isn't he an *only* son, Fardorougha?" exclaimed the wife; "an' my sowl to happiness but I believe you'd see *him* want."

* My beautiful brown girl.

† Love.

"Any way," replied her husband, "I'm not for matches against the consent of parents; they're not lucky; or can't you run away wid her, an' then refuse marryin' her except they come down with the cash."

"Oh, father," exclaimed Connor, "father, father, to become a villain!"

"Connor," said his mother, rising up in a spirit of calm an mournful solemnity, "never heed; go to bed, achora, go to bed."

"Of coorse I'll never heed, mother," he replied; "but I can't help sayin' that, happy as I was a while agone, my father is sendin' me to bed with a heavy heart. When I asked your advice, father, little I thought it would be to do—but no matter! I'll never be guilty of an act that 'ud disgrace my name."

"No, avillish," said his mother, "you never will; God knows it's as much an' more than you an' other people can do, to keep the name we have in dacency."

"It's fine talk," observed Fardorougha, "but what I advise has been done by hundreds that wor married an' happy afterwards; how-an-iver you needn't get into a passion, either of you; I'm not pressin' you, Connor, to it."

"Connor, achree," said his mother, "go to bed, an' instead of the advice you got, ax God's; go, avillish!"

Connor, without making any further observation, sought his sleeping-room, where, after having recommended himself to God in earnest prayer, he lay revolving all that had occurred that night, until the gentle influence of sleep at length drew him into oblivion.

"Now," said his mother to Fardorougha, when Connor had gone, "you must sleep by yourself; for as for me, my side I'll not stretch on the same bed wid you to-night."

"Very well, I can't help that," said her husband; "all I can say is this, that I'm not able to put sense or prudence into you or Connor; so since you won't be

guided by me, take your own coorse. Bodagh Buie's very well able to provide for them; an' if he won't do so *before* they marry, why let Connor have nothin' to say to her."

"I'll tell you what, Fardoroughia, God wouldn't be in heaven, or you will get a cut heart yet, either through your son or your money; an' that it may not be through my darlin' boy, oh, grant sweet Saver o' the airth, this night! I'm goin' to sleep wid Biddy Nulty, an' you'll find a clane night-cap on the rail o' the bed; an', Fardoroughia, afore you put it an, keel down and pray to God to change your heart—for it wants it—it wants it."

In Ireland, as in other countries, the first object of a servant-man, after entering the employment of his master, is to put himself upon an amicable footing with his fellow-servants of the other sex. Such a step, besides being natural in itself, is often taken in consequence of the *esprit de corps* which prevails among persons in that class. Bartle Flanagan, although he could not be said to act from any habit previously acquired in service, went to work with all the tact and adroitness of a veteran. The next morning, after having left the barn where he slept, he contrived to throw himself in the way of Biddy Nulty, a girl, who, though vain and simple, was at the same time conscientious and honest. On passing from the barn to the kitchen, he noticed her returning from the well with a pitcher of water in each hand, and as it is considered an act of civil attention for the male servant, if not otherwise employed, to assist the female in small matters of the kind, so did Flanagan in his best manner and kindest voice bid her good-morrow, and offer to carry home the pitchers.

"It's the least I may do," said he, "now that I'm your fellow-servant: but before you go further lay down your burthen, an' let us chat a while."

"Indeed," replied Biddy, "it's little we expected ever

to see your father's son goin' to earn his bread undher another man's roof."

"Pooh! Biddy! there's greater wondhers in the world than that, woman alive! But tell me—pooh—ay is there a thousand quarer things—but I say, Biddy, how do you like to live wid this family?"

"Why, troth indeed, only for the withered ould *leprechaun* himself, divil a dacenter people ever broke bread."

"Yet, isn't it a wondher that the ould fellow is what he is, sich an oppressin' ould miser, an' he so full o' money?"

"Troth there's one thing myself wondhers at more than *that*."

"What, Biddy? let us hear it."

"Why that *you* could be mane an' shabby enough to come as a sarvint to ate the bread of the man that ruined yez!"

"Biddy," replied Flanagan, "I'm glad you've said it; but do you think I've so bad a heart as to keep revinge in against an inimy? How could I go to my knees at night, if I—no, Biddy, we must be Christians. Well! let us drop that; so you tell me the mother an' son are kind to you."

"As good-hearted a pair as ever lived."

"Connor, of coorse, can't but be *very* kind to so good-looking a girl as you are, Biddy," said Bartle, with a knowing smile.

"Very kind! good looking! ay, indeed I'm sure o' that! Bartle, behave, an' don't be gettin' an wid any o' your palavers. What 'ud make Connor be kind to the likes o' me, that way?"

"I don't see why he oughtn't an' mightn't—you're as good as him, if it goes to that."

"Oh yis, indeed!"

"Why, you know you're handsome."

"Handsome," replied the vain girl, tightening her apron strings, and assuming a sly coquettish look;

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"Bartle, go an' mind your business, and let me bring home my pitchers; it's time the breakwist was down. Sich nonsense!"

"Very well, you're not, thin: you've a bad leg, a bad figure, an' a bad face, and it would be a terrible thing all out for Connor O'Donovan to fall in consate wid you."

"Well, about Connor I could tell you something;—me! tut! go to the sarra; faix you don't know them that Connor's afther, nor the collogin' they all had about it no longer ago than last night itself. I suppose they thought I was asleep, but it was like the hares, wid my eyes open."

"An' it's a pity, Biddy, ever the same two eyes should be shut. Begad myself's beginning to feel quare somehow, when I look at them."

A glance of pretended incredulity was given in return, after which she proceeded—

"Bartle, don't be bringin' yourself to the fair wid sich folly. My eyes is jist as God made them; but I can tell you that before a month o' Sundays passes, I wouldn't be surprised if you see Connor married to—you wouldn't guess?"

"Not I; the divil a hap'orth I know about who he's coortin'."

"No less than our great beauty, Bodagh Buie's daughter, Oona O'Brien. Now, Bartle, for goodness sake, don't let this crass your lips to livin' mortal. Sure I heard him tellin' all to the father and mother last night—they're promised to one another. Eh! blessed saints, Bartle, what ails you? you're as white as a sheet. What's wrong? and what did you start for?"

"Nothin'," replied Flanagan, coolly, "but a stitch in my side. I'm subject to that—it pains me very much while it lasts, and laves my face, as you say, the colour of dimity; but about Connor—upon my throth, I'm main proud to hear it; she's a purty girl, an' besides he'll have a fortune that'll make a man of him;—I am, in throth, heart proud to hear it. It's a pity

Connor's father isn't as dacent as himself. Arrah Biddy, where does the ould codger keep his money?"

"Little of it in the house, any way—sure whenever he scrapes a guinea together he's away wid it to the county——county——och, that county man that keeps the money for the people."

"The Treasurur; well much good may his thrash do him, Biddy! that's the worst I wish him. Come now and I'll lave your pitchers at home, and remember you owe me something for this."

"Good will, I hope."

"*That* for one thing," he replied, as they went along; "but we'll talk more about it when we have time; and I'll thin tell you the truth about what brought me to hire wid Fardorougha Donovan."

Having thus excited that most active principle called female curiosity, both entered the kitchen, where they found Connor and his mother in close and apparently confidential conversation—Fardorougha himself having as usual been abroad upon his farm for upwards of an hour before any of them had risen.

The feelings with which they met that morning at breakfast may be easily understood by our readers, without much assistance of ours. On the part of Fardorougha there was a narrow selfish sense of exultation, if not of triumph, at the chance that lay before his son of being able to settle himself independently in life, without the necessity of making any demand upon the hundreds which lay so safely in the keeping of the County Treasurer. His sordid soul was too deeply imbued with the love of money to perceive that what he had hitherto looked upon as a proof of parental affection and foresight, was nothing more than a fallacy by which he was led day after day farther into his prevailing vice. In other words, now that love for his son, and the hope of seeing him occupy a respectable station in society ought to have justified the reasoning by which he had suffered himself to be guided, it was

apparent that the prudence which he had still considered to be his duty as a kind parent, was nothing else than a mask for his own avarice. The idea, therefore, of seeing Connor settled without any aid from himself, filled his whole soul with a wild hard satisfaction, which gave him as much delight as perhaps he was capable of enjoying. The advice offered to his son on the preceding night appeared to him a matter so reasonable in itself, and the opportunity offered by Una's attachment so well adapted for making it an instrument to work upon the affections of her parents, that he could not for the life of him perceive why they should entertain any rational objection against it.

The warm-hearted mother participated so largely in all that affected the happiness of her son, that if we allow for the difference of sex and position, we might describe their feelings as bearing, in the character of their simple and vivid enjoyment, a very remarkable resemblance. This amiable woman's affection for Connor was reflected upon Una O'Brien, whom she now most tenderly loved, not because the fair girl was beautiful and good, but because she had plighted her troth to that son who had been during his whole life her own solace and delight.

No sooner was the morning meal concluded, and the servants engaged at their respective employments than Honor, acting probably under Connor's suggestion, resolved at once to ascertain whether her husband could so far overcome his parsimony as to establish their son and Una in life; that is, in the event of Una's parents opposing their marriage, and declining to render them any assistance. With this object in view, she told him as he was throwing his great-coat over his shoulders, in order to proceed to the fields, that she wished to speak with him upon a matter of deep importance.

"What is it?" said Fardoroughia, with a hesitating shrug, "what is it? This is ever an' always the way when you want *money*, but I tell you I have no money.

You wor born to waste and extravagance, Honor, and there's no curin' you. What is it you want? an' let me go about my business."

"Throw that ould threadbare cothamore off o' you," replied Honor, "and beg o' God to give you grace to sit down, an' have common feelin' an' common sense."

"If it's money to get clo'es either for yourself or Connor, there's no use in it. I needn't sit; you don't want a stitch either of you."

Honor, without more ado, seized the coat, and flinging it aside, pushed him over to a seat, on which she forced him to sit down.

"As heaven's above me," she exclaimed, "I dunna what'll come over you at all, at all. Your money, your thrash, your dirt and filth, ever, ever, an' for ever more in your thought, heart, and sowl. Oh Chierna! to think of it, an' you know there's a God above you, an' that you must meet him, an' that *without* your money too!"

"Ay, ay, the money's what you want to come at; but I'll not sit here to be hecchor'd. What is it, I say agin, you want?"

"Fardorougha ahagur," continued the wife, checking herself, and addressing him in a kind and affectionate voice, "maybe I *was* spakin' too harsh to you; but sure it was an' is for your own good. How an' ever, I'll thry kindness, and if you have a heart at all, you can't but show it when you hear what I'm goin' to say."

"Well, well, go an," replied the pertinacious husband; "but—money—ay, ay, is there. I feel by the way you're comin' about me, that there is money at the bottom of it."

The wife raised her hands and eyes to heaven, shook her head, and after a slight pause, in which she appeared to consider her appeal a hopeless one, she at length went on in an earnest but subdued and desponding spirit—

"Fardorougha, the time's now come that will show the world whether you love Connor or not."

"I don't care a pin about the world; you an' Connor know well enough that I love him."

"Love for one's child doesn't come out merely in words, Fardorougha; actin' for their benefit shows it betther than spakin'. Don't you grant that?"

"Very well, maybe I do, and agin maybe I don't; there's times when the one's betther than the other; but go an; maybe I do grant it."

"Now tell me where in this parish, ay, or in the next five parishes to it, you'd find sich a boy for a father or mother to be proud out of, as Connor, your own darlin', as you often called him?"

"Divil a one, Honor; *damnh*o to the one; I won't differ wid you in *that*."

"You won't differ wid me! the devil thank you for that. You won't, indeed! but *could* you, I say, if you wor willin'?"

"I tell you I could *not*."

"Now there's sinse an' kindness in that. Very well, you say you're gatherin' up all the money you can *for him*."

"For him—*him*," exclaimed the unconscious miser, "why, what do you mane—for—well—ay—yes, yes, I did say for him; it's for *him* I'm keeping it—it is, I tell you."

"Now, Fardorougha, you know he's ould enough to be settled in life on his own account, an' you *heard* last night the girl he can get, if you stand to him, as he ought to expect from a father that loves him."

"Why, last night, thin, didn't I give my—"

"Whisht, ahagur! hould your tongue awhile, and let me go on. Truth's best—he dotes on that girl to sich a degree, that if he doesn't get her, he'll never see another happy day while he's alive."

"All *feasthalagh*,* Honor—that won't pass wid me; I know otherwise myself. Do you think that if I hadn't

* Nonsense.

got you, I'd been unhappy four an' twenty hours, let alone my whole life? I tell you that's *feasthalagh*, an' won't pass. He wouldn't ate an ounce the less if he was never to get her. You seen the breakfast he made this mornin'; I didn't begrudge it to him, but may I never stir if that Flanagan wouldn't ate a horse behind a saddle; he has a stomach that 'ud require a king's ransom to keep it."

"You know nothing of what I'm spakin' about," replied his wife. "*I wasn't Una dhas dhun* O'Brien in my best days; an' be the Vestment,[†] you warn't Connor, that has more feelin', an' spirit, an' generosity in the nail of his little finger, than ever you had in your whole carkass. I tell you if he doesn't get married to that girl he'll break his heart. Now how can he marry her except you take a good farm for him, and stock it dacently, so that he may have a home, sich as she deserves, to bring her to?"

"How do you know but they'll give her a fortune when they find her bent on him?"

"Why, it's not impossible," said the wife, immediately changing her tactics, "it's not impossible, but I can tell you it's very unlikely."

"The best way, then, in my opinion, 'ud be to spake to Connor about breaking it to the family."

"Why, that's fair enough," said the wife, "I wondher myself I didn't think of it, but the time was so short since last night."

"It is short," replied the miser, "far an' away too short to expect any one to make up their mind about it. Let them not be rash themselves aither, for I tell you that when people marry in haste, they're apt to have time enough to repint at laysure."

"Well, but Fardorougha acushla, now hear me; throth it's thruth and sinse what you say; but still, avourneen, listen; now in case that the Bodagh an' his

* The robes in which the priest celebrates mass.

wife don't consint to their marriage, or to do any thing for them, won't you take them a farm and stock it bravely? Think of poor Connor, the darlin' fine fellow that he is. Oh, thin but it's he 'ud go to the well o' the world's end to aise you, if your little finger only ached. He would, or for myself, and yet his own father to trate him wid sich——"

It was in vain she attempted to proceed; the subject was one in which her heart felt too deep an interest to be discussed without tears. A brief silence ensued, during which Fardoroughia moved uneasily on his seat, took the tongs and mechanically mended the fire, and peering at his wife with a countenance twitched as if by *tic dolooureux*, stared round the house with a kind of stupid wonder, rose up, then sat instantly down, and in fact exhibited many of those unintelligible and uncouth movements, which, in persons of his cast, may be properly termed the hieroglyphics of human action, under feelings that cannot be deciphered either by those on whom they operate, or by those who witness them.

"Yes," said he, "Connor is all you say, an' more, an' more—an'—an'—a rash act is the worst thing he could do. It's betther, Honor, to spake to him, as I sed, about lettin' the matther be known to Una's family out of hand."

"And, thin, if they refuse, you can show them a ginerous example, by puttin' them into a dacent farm. Will you promise me that, Fardoroughia? If you do, all's right, for they're not livin' that ever knew you to break your word or your promise."

"I'll make no promise, Honor; I'll make no promise; but let the other plan be tried first. Now don't be pressin' me; he is—he is a noble boy, and would, as you say, thravel round the earth to keep my little finger from pain; but let me alone about it now—let me alone about it."

This, though slight encouragement, was, still in Honor's opinion, quite as much as, if not more than, she

expected. Without pressing him, therefore, too strongly at that moment, she contented herself with a full-length portrait of their son, drawn with all the skill of a mother who knew, if her husband's heart could be touched at all, those points on which she stood the greatest chance of finding it accessible.

For a few days after this the subject of Connor's love was permitted to lie undebated, in the earnest hope that Fardorougha's heart might have caught some slight spark of natural affection from the conversation which had taken place between him and Honor. They waited consequently with patience for some manifestation on his part of a better feeling, and flattered themselves that his silence proceeded from the struggle which they knew a man of his disposition must necessarily feel in working up his mind to any act requiring him to part with that which he loved better than life. The ardent temperament of Connor, however, could ill brook the pulseless indifference of the old man; with much difficulty therefore, was he induced to wait a whole week for the issue, though sustained by his mother's assurance, that in consequence of the impression left on her by their last conversation, she was certain the father, if not urged beyond his wish, would declare himself willing to provide for them. A week, however, elapsed, and Fardorougha moved on in the same hard and insensible spirit which was usual to him, wholly engrossed by money, and never either directly or indirectly appearing to remember that the happiness and welfare of his son were at stake, or depending upon the determination to which he might come.

Another half-week passed, during which Connor had made two unsuccessful attempts to see Una, in order that some fixed plan of intercourse might be established between them, at least until his father's ultimate resolution on the subject proposed to him should be known. He now felt deeply distressed, and regretted that the ardour of his attachment had so far borne him away

during their last meeting, that he had forgotten to concert measures with Una for their future interviews.

He had often watched about her father's premises from a little before twilight until the whole family had gone to bed, yet without any chance either of conversing with her, or of letting her know that he was in the neighbourhood. He had gone to chapel, too, with the hope of seeing her, or snatching a hasty opportunity of exchanging a word or two, if possible, but to his astonishment she was absent from mass—an omission of duty of which she had not been guilty for the last three years. What, therefore, was to be done? For him to be detected lurking about the Bodagh's house might create suspicion, especially after their interview in the garden, which very probably had, through the officiousness of the servants, been communicated to her parents. In a matter of such difficulty he bethought him of a confidant, and the person to whom the necessity of the case directed him was Bartle Flanagan. Bartle, indeed, ever since he entered into his father's service, had gained rapidly upon Connor's good-will, and on one or two occasions well nigh succeeded in drawing from him a history of the mutual attachment which subsisted between him and Una. His good humour, easy language, and apparent friendship for young O'Donovan, together with his natural readiness of address, or if you will, of manner, all marked him out as admirably qualified to act as a confidant in a matter which required the very tact and talent he possessed.

"Poor fellow," thought Connor to himself, "it will make him feel more like one of the family than a servant. If he can think that he's treated as my friend and companion, he may forget that he's eating the bread of the very man that drove him and his to destruction. Ay, an' if we're married, I'm not sure but I'll have him to give me away too."

This resolution of permitting Flanagan to share his confidence had been come to by Connor upon the day

subsequent to that on which he had last tried to see Una. After his return home, the disappointment on one hand, and his anxiety concerning his father's liberality on the other, together with the delight arising from the certainty of being beloved, all kept his mind in a tumult, and permitted him to sleep but little. The next day he decided on admitting Bartle to his confidence, and reposing this solemn trust in his integrity. He was lying on his back in the meadow—for they had been ricking the hay from the lapcocks, when that delicious languor which arises from the three greatest provocatives to slumber, want of rest, fatigue, and heat, so utterly overcame him, that, forgetting his love, and all the anxiety arising from it, he fell into a dreamless and profound sleep.

From this state he was aroused after about an hour by the pressure of something sharp and painful against his side, near the region of the heart, and on looking up he discovered Bartle Flanagan standing over him with a pitchfork in his hand, one end of which was pressed against his breast, as if he had been in the act of driving it forward into his body. His face was pale, his dark brows frightfully contracted, and his teeth apparently set together, as if working under some fearful determination. When Connor awoke, Flanagan broke out into a laugh that no language could describe. The character of mirth which he wished to throw into his face, jarred so terrifically with its demoniacal expression when first seen by Connor, that even unsuspecting as the latter was, he started up with alarm, and asked Flanagan what was the matter. Flanagan, however, laughed on—peal after peal succeeded—he tossed the pitchfork aside, and clapping both his hands on his face, continued the paroxysms until he recovered his composure.

“ Oh,” said he, “ I’m sick, I’m as wake as a child wid laughin’; but, Lord bless us, after all, Connor, what is a man’s life worth when he has an enemy near

him. There was I, ticklin' you wid the pitchfork, strivin' to waken you, and one inch of it would have baked your bread for life. Didn't you feel me, Connor?"

"Divil a bit, till the minute afore I ris."

"Then the divil a purtier jig ever you danced in your life; wait till I show you how your left foot wint."

He accordingly lay down and illustrated the pretended action, after which he burst out into another uncontrollable fit of mirth.

"'Twas jist for all the world," said he, "as if I tied a string to your toe, for you groaned an' grunted, an' went on like I dunna what; but Connor, what makes you so sleepy to-day as well as on Monday last?"

"That's the very thing," replied the unsuspecting and candid young man, "that I wanted to spake to you about."

"What! about sleepin' in the meadows?"

"Divil a bit o' that Bartle, not a morsal of sleepin' in the meadows is consarned in what I'm goin' to mintion to you. Bartle, didn't you tell me, the day you hired with my father, that you wor in love?"

"I did, Connor, I did."

"Well, so am I; but do you know who I'm in love with?"

"How the divil, man could I?"

"Well, no swearin', Bartle; keep the commandments, my boy. I'll tell you in the mane time, an' that's more than you did to me, you close-mouth-is-a-sign-of-a-wise-head spalpeen."

"Hard fortune to you go an, and don't be keepin' me in on the tenther hooks—who's the girl?"

"Did you ever hear tell of one *Colleen dhas dhun*, as she's called, known by the name of Una or Oona O'Brien, daughter to one Bodagh Buie O'Brien, the richest man, barrin' a born gentleman, in the three parishes."

"All very fair, Connor, for you or any one else to

be in love wid her—ay, or man alive, for myself, if it goes to that—but—*but* Connor, avouchal, are you sure that you'll ever bring her to be in love wid you?"

"Bartle," said Connor, seriously, and after a sudden change in his whole manner, "in this business I'm goin' to trate you as a friend and a brother. She loves me, Bartle, and a solemn promise of marriage has passed between us."

"Connor," said Bartle, "it's wondherful, it's wondherful; you couldn't believe what a fool I am—fool! no but a faint-hearted, cowardly villian."

"What do you mane, Bartle? what the dickins are you drivin' at?"

"Drivin' at? whenever I happen to have an opportunity of makin' a drive that id'—hut! I'm talkin' balderdash. Do you see here, Connor," said he, putting his hand to his neck, "do you see here?"

"To be sure I do. Well, what about *there*?"

"Be my sowl I'm very careful of—hut!—sure I may as well tell you the whole truth—I sed I was in love; well, man, that was throe, an'," he added in a low pithy whisper, "I was near—no, Connor, I won't; but go an; it's enough for you to know that I was an' am in love, an' that it'll go hard wid me if ever *any one else* is married to the girl *I'm* in love wid. Now that *my* business is past, let me hear *yours*, poor fellow, an' I'm divilish glad to know, Connor, that—that—why tundher an' ouns, that you are not as I am. Be the crass that saved us, Connor, I'm glad of that."

"Why love will set you mad, Bartle, if you don't take care of yourself; an' faith I dunna but it may do the same with myself, if I'm disappointed. However, the truth is, you must sarve me in this business. I struv to see her twiste, but couldn't, an' I'm afraid of bein' seen spyin' about the place."

"The thruth is, Connor, you want to make me a go-between—a blackfoot; very well, I'll do that same on your account, an' do it well, too, I hope."

It was then arranged that Flanagan, who was personally known to some of the Bodagh's servants, should avail himself of that circumstance, and contrive to gain an interview with Una, in order to convey her a letter from O'Donovan. He was further enjoined by no means to commit it into the hands of any person save those of Una herself, and, in the event of his not being able to see her, then the letter was to be returned to Connor. If he succeeded, however, in delivering it, he was to await an answer, provided she found an opportunity of sending one; if not, she was to inform Connor, through Flanagan, at what time and place he could see her. This arrangement having been made, Connor immediately wrote the letter, and after having despatched Flanagan upon his errand, set himself to perform, by his individual labour, the task which his father had portioned out for both. Ere Bartle's return Fardoroughia came to inspect their progress in the meadow, and, on finding that the servant was absent, he inquired sharply into the cause of it.

"He's gone on a message for me," replied Connor with the utmost frankness.

"But that's a bad way for him to mind his business," said his father.

"I'll have the task that you set both of us finished," replied the son, "so that you'll lose nothing by his absence, at all events."

"It's wrong, Connor, it's wrong; where did you send him to?"

"To Bodagh Buie's wid a letter to Una."

"It's a waste of time, an' a loss of work; about that business, I have something to say to your mother an' you to-night afther the supper, when the others goes to bed."

"I Hope, father, you'll do the dacent thing still."

"No: but I hope, son, you'll do the wise thing still; how-an-ever, let me alone now; if you expect me to do any thing you mustn't drive me as your mother does."

To-night we'll make up a plan that'll out-do Bodagh Buie. Before you come home, Connor, throw a stone or two in that gap, to prevent the cows from gettin' into the hay; it won't cost you much trouble. But Connor, *honomon dioul*, did you ever see sich a gut as Bartle has? He'll brake me out o' house an' home feedin' him; he has a stomach for ten-penny nails; be my word it 'ud be a charity to give him a dose of oak-bark to make him dacent; he's a divil at aiten', an' little good may it do him!"

The hour of supper arrived without Bartle returning, and Connor's impatience began to overcome him, when, Fardorougha, for the first time, introduced the subject which lay nearest his son's heart.

"Connor," he began, "I've been thinkin' of this affair with Una O'Brien; an' in my opinion there's but one way of it; but if you're a fool and stand in your own light, it's not my fault."

"What is the way, father," inquired Connor.

"The very same I tould your mother an' you before—run away wid her—I mane make a runaway match of it—then refuse to marry her unless they come down wid the money. You know after runnin' away wid you, nobody else ever would marry *her*, so that rather than see their child disgraced, never fear but they'll pay down on the nail, or maybe bring you both to live wid 'em."

"My sowl to glory, Fardorougha," said his wife, "but you're a bigger an' cunniner ould rougue than ever I tuck you for. By the scapular upon me, if I had known how you'd turn out, the sarra carry the ring ever you'd put on *my* finger."

"Father," said Connor, "I must be disobedient to you in this at all evints. It's plain you'll do nothing for us, so there's no use in sayin' any thing more about it. I have no manes of supportin' her, and I swear by the blessed sacrayment I'll never bring her to shame or poverty. If I had money to carry me I'd go to

America, an' thry my fortune there; but I have not. Father, it's too hard that you should stand in my way when you could so easily make me happy; who have you sich a right to assist as your son—your only son, an' your only child too?"

This was spoken in a tone of respect and sorrow at once impressive and affectionate. His fine features were touched with something beyond sadness or regret, and as the tears stood in his eyes, it was easy to see that he felt much more deeply for his father's want of principle than for any thing connected with his own hopes and prospects. In fact the tears that rolled silently down his cheeks were the tears of shame and sorrow, for a parent who could thus school him to an act of such unparalleled baseness. As it was, the genius of the miser felt rebuked by the natural delicacy and honour of the son—the old man therefore shrunk back abashed, confused, and moved at the words which he had heard—simple and inoffensive though they were.

"Fardoroughia," said the wife, wiping her eyes, that were kindling into indignation, "we're now married goin' an'—"

"I think, mother," said Connor, "the less we say about it now the better—with my own good will I'll never spake on the subject."

"You're right, avourneen," replied the mother; "you're right; I'll say nothing—God sees it's no use."

"What would you have me do?" said the old man, rising and walking about in unusual distress and agitation;—"you don't know me—I can't do it—I can't do it. You say, Honor, I don't care about him—I'd give him my blood—I'd give him my blood to save a hair of his head. My life an' happiness depends on him; but who knows how he an' his wife might mismanage that money if they got it—both young and foolish. It wasn't for nothing it came into my mind what I'm afeard will happen to me yet."

"And what was that, Fardorougha?" asked the wife.

"Sich foreknowledge doesn't come for nothing, Honor. I've had it and felt it hangin' over me this many a long day, that I'd come to starvation yit; an' I see, if you force me to do as you wish, that it 'll happen. I'm as sure of it as that I stand where I do; I'm an unfortunate man wid sich a fate before me; and yet I'd shed my blood for my boy—I would, an' he ought to know I would; but he wouldn't ax me to starve for him—would you, Connor, avich machree, would you ax your father to starve? I'm unhappy—unhappy—an' my heart's breakin'."

The old man's voice failed him as he uttered the last words; for the conflict which he felt evidently convulsed his whole frame. He wiped his eyes, and again sitting down he wept bitterly and in silence, for many minutes.

A look of surprise, compassion, and deep distress passed between Connor and his mother. The latter also was very much affected and said.

"Fardorougha, dear, maybe I spake sometimes too cross to you; but if I do, God above know's it's not that I bear you ill-will, but bekase I'm throubled about poor Connor; but I hope I won't speak angry to you agin; at all events if I do, remember it's only the mother plaidin' for her son—the only son an' child that God was plased to sind her."

"Father," added Connor, also deeply moved, "don't distress yourself about me—don't, father dear. Let things take their chance, but come or go what will, any good fortune that might happen me wouldn't be sweet if it came by givin' you a sore heart."

At this moment the barking of the dog gave notice of approaching footsteps; and in a few moments the careless whistle of Bartle Flanagan was heard within a few yards of the door.

"This is Bartle," said Connor; "maybe, father, his answer may throw some light upon the business. At

any rate, as there's no secret in it, we'll all hear what news he brings us."

He had scarcely concluded when the latch was lifted, but Bartle could not enter.

"It's locked and bolted," said Fardoroughia; "as he sleeps in the barn I forgot that he was to come in here any more to-night—open it, Connor."

"For the sake of all the money you keep in the house, father," said Connor, smiling, "it's hardly worth your while to be so timorous; but God help the County Treasurer if ~~he~~ forgot to bar his door—Asy, Bartle, I'm openin' it."

Flanagan immediately entered; and, with all the importance of a confidant, took his seat at the fire.

"Well, Bartle," said Connor, "what news?"

"Let the boy get his supper first," said Honor; "Bartle, you must be starved wid the hunger."

"Faith, I'm middling well I thank you that same way," replied Bartle; "divil a one o' me but's as ripe for my supper as a July cherry; an' wid the blessin' o' heaven upon my endayvours I'll soon show you what good execution is."

A deep groan from Fardoroughia gave back a fearful echo to the truth of this formidable annunciation.

"Arn't you well, Fardoroughia?" asked Bartle.

"Throth I'm not, Bartle; never was more uncomfortable in my life."

Flanagan immediately commenced his supper, which consisted of flummery and new milk—a luxury among the lower ranks which might create envy in an epicure. As he advanced in the work of destruction, the grey eye of Fardoroughia, which followed every spoonful that entered his mouth, scintillated like that of a cat when rubbed down the back, though from a directly opposite feeling. He turned and twisted on the chair, and looked from his wife to his son, then turned up his eyes, and appeared to feel as if a dagger entered his heart with every additional dig of Bartle's spoon into the

flummery. The son and wife smiled at each other; for they could enjoy those petty sufferings of Fardorougha with a great deal of good humour.

"Bartle," said Connor, "what's the news?"

"Divil a word worth tellin'; at laste that I can hear."

"I mane from Bodagh Buie's."

Bartle stared at him; "Bodagh Buie's! what do I know about Bodagh Buie? are you ravin'?"

"Bartle," said Connor, smiling, "my father and mother knows all about it—an' about your going to Una with the letter. I have no saicrets from them."

"Hoot toot! That's a horse of another colour; but you wouldn't have me, widout knowin' as much, to go to betray trust. In the mane time I may as well finish my supper before I begin to tell you whatsoever I happen to know about it."

Another deep groan from Fardorougha followed the last observation,

At length the work of demolition ceased, and after Honor had put past the empty dish, Bartle, having wiped his mouth, and uttered a hiccup or two, thus commenced to dole out his intelligence:—

"Whin I wint to the Bodagh's," said Bartle, "it was wid great schamin' an' throuble I got a sight of Miss Una at all, in regard of—(hiccup)—in regard of her not knowin' that there was any sich message for her—(hiccup.) But happenin' to know Kitty Lowry, I made bould to go into the kitchen to ax, you know, how was her aunt's family up in Skelgy, when who should I find before me in it but Sally and Miss Una—(hiccup.) Of coorse I shook hands wid her—wid Kitty I mane; 'an' Kitty,' said I, 'I was sent in wid a message from the mather to you; he's in the haggard an' wants you.' So, begad, ou—(hiccup)—out she goes, an' the coast bein' clear, 'Miss Una,' says I, here's a scrape of a letther from Mr. Connor O'Donovan; read it, an' if you can write him an answer, do; if you haven't time say whatever you have to say by me.' She go—(hiccup)

she got all colours when I handed it to her; an' run away, sayin' to me, 'wait for a while an' don't go till I see you.' In a minute or two Kitty comes in again as mad as the dickens wid me: 'the curse o' the crows an you,' says she, 'why did you make me run a fool's errand for no reason. The master wasn't in the haggard, an' didn't want me good or bad.'

"Bartle," said the impatient lover, "pass all that over for the present, an' let us know the answer, if she sent any."

"Sent any! be my sowl she did so; after readin' your letther, an' findin' that she could depind on me, she said that for fear of any remarks bein' made about my waitin', espishially as I live at present in this family, it would be better she thought to answer it by word o' mouth. 'Tell him,' said she, 'that I didn't think he wa—(hiccup) ("Queen o' heaven!" from his master,) was so dull an' ignorant o' the customs of the country, as not to know whin young people want to see one another they stay from mass wid an expectation that'—begad I disremember exactly her own words: but it was as much as to say that she staid at home on last Sunday expectin' to see you when they were all gone to mass."

"Well, but Bartle, what else?—short an' sweet, man."

"Why, she'll meet you on next Thursday night, God willin', in the same place; an' whin I axed her where, she said you knew it yourself."

"An' is that all?"

"No it's not all; she sed it 'ud be betther to mintion the thing to her father. Afther thinkin' it over she says, 'as your father has the na—(hiccup) (Saints above!) name of bein' so rich, she dosen't know if a friend 'ud interfare but his consint might be got;' an' that's all I have to say about it, barrin' that she's a very purty girl, an' I advise you not to be *too sure of her yet*, Connor. So now I'm for the barn—good night Far—(hiccup) ("at my cost you do it!" from the miser again,) Fardoroughia."

He rose and proceeded to his sleeping place in the barn, whither Connor, who was struck by his manner, accompanied him.

"Bartle," said O'Donovan, "did you take anything since I saw you last?"

"Only share of two naggins wid my brother Antony at Peggy Finigan's."

"I noticed it upon you," observed Connor; "but I don't think they did."

"An' if they did, too, it's not high thrason, I hope."

"No; but Bartle, I'm oblaiged to you. You've acted as a friend to me, an' I won't forget it to you."

"*Dhar Deah*, an' I'm so much oblaiged to you, Connor, that I'll remimber your employin' me in this the longest day I have to live. But, Connor?"

"Well, Bartle."

"I'd take the sacrement, that after all, a ring you'll never put on her."

"And what makes you think so, Bartle?"

"I don't—I do—(hiccup) don't know; but, somehow, something or another tells it to me that you won't; others is fond of her I suppose as well as yourself; and of coorse they'll stand betune you."

"Ay, but I'm sure of her."

"*Dhar Chriastha*, but you're not; wait till I see you man and wife, an' thin I'll say so. Here's myself, Connor, is in love, an' dhough I don't think that ever the girl will or would marry me, be the crass of heaven no other man will have her. Now, how do you know but you may have some one like me—like me, Connor, to stand against you?"

"Bartle," said Connor, laughing, "your head's a little moidher'd; give me your hand; whish! the divil take you, man, don't wring my fingers off. Say your prayers, Bartle, an' go to sleep. I say agin I won't forget your kindness to me this night."

Flanagan had now deposited himself upon his straw bed, and after having tucked the bed-clothes about

him, said, in the relaxed indolent voice of a man about to sleep,

“ Good night, Connor ; throth my head’s a little soft to-night—good night ! ”

“ Good night, Bartle ! ”

“ Connor ? ”

“ Well ? ”

“ Didn’t I stand to you to-night ? Very well—goo—(hiccup) good night ! ”

On Connor’s return, a serious conclave was held upon the best mode of procedure in a matter which presented difficulties that appeared to be insurmountable. The father seizing upon the advice transmitted by Una herself, as that which he had already suggested, insisted that the most judicious course was to propose for her openly, and without appearing to feel that there was any inferiority on the part of Connor.

“ If they talk about wealth, Connor,” said he, “ say that you are my son, an’ that—that—no—no—I’m too poor for sich a boast,—but say that you will be able to take good care of any thing you get.”

At this moment the door, which Connor had not bolted, as his father would have done, opened, and Bartle, wrapped in the treble folds of a winnow-cloth, made a distant appearance.”

“ Beg pardon, Connor ; I forgot to say that Una’s brother, the young priest out o’ Maynooth, will be at home from his uncle’s, where it appears he is at present ; and Miss Una would wish that the proposial ’ud be made while he’s at his father’s. She says he’ll stand her friend, come or go what will. I forgot, begad, to mention it before—so begs pardon, an’ wishes you all good night ! ”

This information tended to confirm them in the course recommended by Fardoroughia. It was accordingly resolved upon that he (Fardoroughia) himself should wait upon Bodagh Buie, and in the name of his son formally propose for the hand of his daughter.

To effect this, however, was a matter of no ordinary difficulty, as they apprehended that the Bodagh and his wife would recoil with indignation at the bare notion of even condescending to discuss a topic which, in all probability they would consider as an insult. Not, after all, that there existed, according to the opinion of their neighbours, such a vast disparity in the wealth of each; on the contrary, many were heard to assert, that, of the two, Fardorougha had the heavier purse. His character, however, was held in such abhorrence by all who knew him, and he ranked in point of personal respectability and style of living, so far beneath the Bodagh, that we question if any ordinary occurrence could be supposed to fall upon the public with greater amazement than a marriage, or the report of a marriage, between any member of the two families. The O'Donovans felt, however, that it was better to make the experiment already agreed on, than longer to remain in a state of uncertainty about it. Should it fail, the position of the lovers, though perhaps rendered somewhat less secure, would be such as to suggest, so far as they themselves were concerned, the necessity of a more prompt and effectual course of action. Fardorougha expressed his intention of opening the matter on the following day; but his wife, with a better knowledge of female character, deemed it more judicious to defer it until after the interview which was to take place between Connor and Una on the succeeding Thursday. It might be better, for instance, to make the proposal first to Mrs. O'Brien herself, or on the other hand to the Bodagh, but touching that and other matters relating to what was proposed to be done, Una's opinion and advice might be necessary.

Little passed, therefore, worthy of note, during the intermediate time, except a short conversation between Bartle and Connor on the following day, as they returned to the field from dinner.

"Bartle," said the other, "you wor a little soft last night: or rather a good dale so."

"Faith, no doubt o' that—but when a man meets an ould acquaintance or two, he don't like to refuse a thrate. I fell in wid three or four *boys*—all friends o' mine, an' we had a sup on account of what's expected."

As he uttered these words, he looked at Connor with an eye which seemed to say—you are not in a certain secret with which I am acquainted.

"Why," replied Connor, "What do you mane, Bartle? I thought you wor with your brother—at laste you tould me so."

Flanagan started on hearing this.

"Wid my brother!" said he—"why, I—I—what else could I tell you? he was along wid the boys when I met them."

"Took a sup on account o' what's expected!—an' what's the manin' o' that, Bartle?"

"Why, what would it mane—but—but—your marriage?"

"An' thundher an' fury," exclaimed Connor, his eye gleaming, "did you go to betray trust, an' mintion Una's name an' mine, afther what I tould you?"

"Don't be foolish, Connor," replied Flanagan; "is it mad you'd have me to be? I said there was something expected soon, that 'ud surprise them; and when they axed me what it was—honour bright! I gave them a knowin' wink, but said nothin'. Eh! was that breakin' trust? Arrah, be my soul, Connor, you don't trate me well by the words you spoke this blessed minute."

"An' how does it come, Bartle, my boy, that you had one story last night, an' another to-day?"

"Faix, very aisily, bekase I forget what I said last night—for sure enough I was more cut than you thought—but didn't I keep it well in before the ould couple?"

" You did fairly enough—I grant that ; but the moment you got into the barn a blind man could see it."

" Bekase I didn't care a button wanst I escaped from the eye of your father ; any how, bad luck to it for whiskey ; I have a murdherin' big heddick all day after it."

" It's a bad weed, Bartle, and the less a man has to do with it, the less he'll be throubled aither with a sore head or a sore conscience."

" Connor, divil a one, but you're the moral of a good boy ; I dunna a fault you have but one."

" Come let us hear it."

" I'll tell you some day, but not now, not now—but *I will* tell you—an' I'll let you know the reason thin that I don't mintion it now ; an' in the mane time I'll sit down an take a smoke."

" A smoke ! why I never knew you smoked."

" Nor I, myself, till last night. This tindher box I was made a present of to light my pipe wid, when not near a coal. Begad, now that I think of it, I suppose it was smokin' that knocked me up so much last night, an' made my head so sick to-day."

" It help'd it, I'll engage ; if you take my advice it's a custom you won't larn."

" I have a good dale to throuble me, Connor ; you know I have ; an' what we are brought down to now ; I have more nor you'd believe to think of ; as much, any way as 'll make this box an' steel useful I hope—when I'm frettin'."

Flanagan spoke truth in assuring Connor that the apology given for his intoxication on the preceding night had escaped his memory. It was fortunate for him, indeed, that O'Donovan, like all candid and ingenuous persons, was utterly devoid of suspicion, otherwise he might have perceived by the discrepancy in the two accounts, as well as by Flanagan's confusion, that he was a person in whom it might not be prudent to place much confidence.

CHAPTER VI.

THE tryste between Connor and Una was held at the same place and hour as before, and so rapid a progress had love made in each of their hearts, that we question if the warmth of their interview, though tender and innocent, would be apt to escape the censure of our strictest readers. Both were depressed by the prospect that lay before them, for Connor frankly assured her that he feared no earthly circumstance could ever soften his father's heart, so far as to be prevailed upon to establish him in life.

"What then can I do, my darling Una? If your father and mother won't consent—as I fear they won't—am I to bring you into the miserable cabin of a day labourer? for to this the son of a man so wealthy as my father must sink. No, Una dear, I have sworn never to bring you to poverty, an' I will not."

"Connor," she replied, somewhat gravely, "I thought you had formed a different opinion of me. You know but little of your own Una's heart, if you think she wouldn't live with you in a cabin a thousand an' a thousand times sooner than she would live with any other in a palace. I love you for your own sake, Connor; but it appears you don't think so."

Woman can never bear to have her love undervalued, nor the moral dignity of a passion which can sacrifice all worldly and selfish considerations to its own purity of attachment unappreciated. When she uttered the last words, therefore, tears of bitter sorrow, mingled with offended pride, came to her aid. She sobbed for some moments, and again went on to reproach him with forming so unfair an estimate of her affection.

"I repeat that I loved you for yourself only, Connor, and I think of what *I* would feel, if *you* refused to spend your life in a cottage with me. If I thought

you wished to marry me, not because I am Una O'Brien, but the daughter of a wealthy man, my heart would break, and if I thought you were not true-minded, and pure-hearted, and honourable, I would rather be dead than united to you at all."

"I love you so well, and so much, Una, that I doubt I'm not worthy of you—an' its fear of seein' you brought down to daily labour that's crushing an' breaking my heart."

"But, dear Connor—what is there done by any cottager's wife that I don't do every day of my life? Do you think that my mother lets me pass my time in idleness, or that I myself could bear to be unemployed even if she did; I can milk, make butter, spin, sew, wash, knit, and clean a kitchen;—why, you have no notion," she added, with a smile, "what a clever cottager's wife I'd make."

"Oh Una," said Connor, now melted into tenderness greater than he had ever before felt; "Una dear, it's useless—it's useless—I can't, no I couldn't—an' I will not live without you, even if we were to beg together—but what is to be done?"

"Now," she replied, "while my brother John is at home is the time to propose it to my father and mother, who look upon him with eyes of such affection and delight that I am half-inclined to think their consent may be gained."

"But, maybe, darling, *his* consent will be as hard to gain as their own."

"Now," she replied, fondly, "only you're a hard-hearted thing that's afraid to live in a cottage with me, I could tell you some good news—or rather you doubt me—an' fear that I wouldn't live in one with you."

A kiss was the reply, after which he said—

"With you, my dear Una, now that you're satisfied, I would live and die in a prison—with *you*, with *you*—in whatever state of life we may be placed, *with* you, but *without* you—never, I could not—I could not.——"

"Well, we are young, you know, and neither of us

proud—and I am not a lazy girl—indeed I am not; but you forget the good news.”

“I forget that, and every thing else but yourself, darling, while I’m in your company. O heavens! if you were once my own, and that we were never to be separated!”

“Well, but the good news!”

“What is it, dear?”

“I have mentioned our affection to my brother, and he has promised to assist us. He has heard of your character, and of your mother’s, and says that it’s unjust to visit upon you——”

She paused—“you know, my dear Connor, that you must not be offended with any thing I say.”

“I know, my sweet treasure, what you’re going to say,” replied Connor with a smile; “nobody need be delicate in sayin’ that my father loves the money, and knows how to put guinea to guinea: that’s no saicret: I wish he loved it less, to be sure, but it cannot be helped; in the mean time, *ma colleen dhas dhun*—oh, how I love them words! God bless your brother, he must have a kind heart, Una dear, and he must love you very much, when he promises to assist us.”

“He has, and will; but Connor, why did you send such a disagreeable, forward, and prying person as your father’s servant to bring me your message? I do not like him—he almost stared me out of countenance.”

“Poor fellow,” said Connor, “I feel a good dale for him, an’ I think he’s an honest, good-hearted boy, an’ besides, he’s in love himself.”

“I know he was always a starer, and I say again *I don’t* like him.”

“But as the case stands, dear Una, I have no one else to trust to—at all events, he’s in our saicret, and the best way, if he’s not honest, is to keep him in it; at laste if we put him out of it now, he might be talkin’ to our disadvantage afterwards.”

“There’s truth in that, and we must only trust him

with as little of our real secrets as possible ; I cannot account for the strong prejudice I feel against him, and have felt for the last two years. He always dressed above his means, and once or twice attempted to speak to me."

" Well, but I know he's in love with some one, for he told me so ; poor fellow, I'm bound, my dear Una, to show him any kindness in my power."

After some further conversation, it was once more decided that Fardorougha should, on the next day, see the Bodagh and his wife, in order to ascertain whether their consent could be obtained to the union of our young and anxious lovers. This step, as the reader knows, was every way in accordance with Fardorougha's inclination. Connor himself would have preferred his mother's advocacy to that of a person possessing such a slender hold on their good will as his other parent. But upon consulting with her, she told him that the fact of the proposal coming from Fardorougha might imply a disposition on his part to provide for his son ; at all events, she hoped that contradiction, the boast of superior wealth, or some fortunate collision of mind and principle, might strike a spark of generous feeling out of her husband's heart, which nothing, she knew, under strong excitement, such as might arise from the bitter pride of the O'Briens, could possibly do. Besides, as she had no favourable expectations from the interview, she thought it an unnecessary and painful task to subject herself to the insults which she apprehended from the Bodagh's wife, whose pride and importance towered far and high over those even of her consequential husband.

This just and sensible view of the matter, on the part of the mother, satisfied Connor, and reconciled him to his father's disinclination to be accompanied by her to the scene of conflict ; for in truth, Fardorougha protested against her assistance with a bitterness which could not easily be accounted for.

"If your mother goes, let her go by herself," said he; "for I'll not intherfare in't if she does. I'll take the dirty Bodagh and his fat wife my own way, which I can't do if Honor comes to be snibbin' an' makin' little o' me afore them. Maybe I'll pull down their pride for them betther than you think, an' in a way they're not prepared for; them an' their jantin' car!"

Neither Connor nor his mother could help being highly amused at the singularity of the miserable pomp and parsimonious display resorted to by Fardoroughia, in preparing for this extraordinary mission. Out of an old strongly locked chest he brought forth a *gala* coat, which had been duly aired, but not thrice worn within the last twenty years. The progress of time and fashion had left it so odd, *outré*, and ridiculous, that Connor, though he laughed, could not help feeling depressed on considering the appearance his father must make when dressed, or rather disfigured, in it. Next came a pair of knee breeches by the same hand, and which, in compliance with the taste of the age that produced them, were made to button so far down as the calf of the leg. Then appeared a waistcoat, whose long pointed flaps reached nearly to the knees. Last of all was produced a hat not more than three inches deep in the crown, and brimmed so narrowly, that a spectator would almost imagine the leaf had been cut off. Having pranked himself out in those habiliments, contrary to the strongest expostulations of both wife and son, he took his staff and set forth. But lest the reader should expect a more accurate description of his person, when dressed, we shall endeavour at all events to present him with a loose outline. In the first place, his head was surmounted with a hat that resembled a flat skillet, wanting the handle; his coat, from which avarice and penury had caused him to shrink away, would have fitted a man twice his size, and as he had become much stooped, its tail, which, at the best, had been posterously long, now nearly swept the

ground. To look at him behind, in fact, he appeared all body. The flaps of his waistcoat he had pinned up with his own hands, by which piece of exquisite taste, he displayed a pair of thighs so thin and disproportioned to his small-clothes, that he resembled a boy who happens to wear the breeches of a fullgrown man, so that to look at him in front he appeared all legs. A pair of shoes, polished with burned straw and buttermilk, and surmounted by two buckles, scoured away to skeletons, completed his costume. In this garb he set out with a crookheaded staff, into which long use, and the habit of griping fast whatever he got in his hand, had actually worn the marks of his forefinger and thumb.

Bodagh Buie, his wife, and their two children, were very luckily assembled in the parlour, when the nondescript figure of the deputy wooer made his appearance in that part of the neat road which terminated at the gate of the little lawn that fronted the hall-door. Here there was an other gate to the right, that opened into the farm or kitchen yard, and as Fardorougha hesitated which to enter, the family within had an opportunity of getting a clearer view of his features and person.

"Who is that quare figure standin' there?" inquired the Bodagh; "did you ever see such a——ah thin, who can he be?"

"Somebody comin' to some o' the sarvingts, I suppose," replied the wife; "why, thin, it's not unlike little Dick *Croitka*, the fairyman."

In sober truth, Fardorougha was so completely disguised by his dress, especially by his hat, whose shallowness and want of brim gave his face and head so wild and eccentric an appearance, that we question if his own family, had they not seen him dress, could have recognized him. At length he turned into the kitchen-yard, and addressing a labourer whom he met, asked—

"I say, nabour, which is the right way into Bodagh Buie's house?"

"There's two right ways into it, an' you may take

either o' them—but if you want any favour from him, you had bettther call him *Mr.* O'Brien. The Bodagh's a name was first given to his father, an' he bein' a dacenter man, doesn't like it, although it sticks to him; so there's a lift for you, my hipstriddled little codger."

"But which is the right door o' the house?"

"There it is, the kitchen—peg in—that's *your* intrhance, barrin' you're a gintleman in disguise—an' if you be, why turn out again to that other gate, strip off your shoes, and pass up ginteely on your tippy-toes, and give a thunderin' whack to the green ring that's hangin' from the door. But see, friend," added the man, "maybe you'd do one a sarvice?"

"How," said Fardoroughia, looking earnestly at him; "what is it?"

"Why, to lave us a lock o' your hair before you go," replied the wag, with a grin,

The miser took no notice whatsoever of this, but was turning quietly out of the yard, to enter by the lawn, when the man called out in a commanding voice—

"Back here, you codger—tundher an' thump—back I say—you won't be let in that way—thramp back, you *leprechaun*, into the kitchen—eh? you won't—well, well, take what you'll get—an' that'll be the way back agin."

'Twas at this moment that the keen eye of Una recognized the features of her lover's father, and a smile which she felt it impossible to subdue, settled upon her face, which became immediately mantled with blushes. On hurrying out of the room she plucked her brother's sleeve, who followed her to the hall.

"I can scarcely tell you, dear John," she said, speaking rapidly, "it's Fardoroughia O'Donovan, Connor's father; and as you know his business, stay in the parlour;" she squeezed his hand, and added with a smile on her face, and a tear in her eye, "I fear it's all over with me—I don't know whether to laugh or cry—but stay, John dear, an' fight my battle—poor Una's battle."

She ran up stairs, and immediately one of the most beggarly, sordid, and pusillanimous knocks that ever spoke of starvation and misery was heard at the door.

"I will answer it myself," thought the amiable brother; "for if my father or mother does, he surely will not be allowed in."

John could scarcely preserve a grave face, when Fardorougha presented himself.

"Is *Misther* O'Brien widin'," inquired the usurer, shrewdly availing himself of the hint he received from the servant.

"My father is," replied John; "have the goodness to step in."

Fardorougha entered immediately, followed by young O'Brien, who said,

"Father, this is Mr. O'Donovan, who, it appears, has some important business with the family."

"Don't be mistherin' *me*," replied Fardorougha, helping himself to a seat; "I'm too poor to be misthered."

"With this family!" exclaimed the father in amazement; "what business can Fardorougha Donovan have with *this* family, John?"

"About our childhre," replied the miser; "about my son and your daughter."

"Au' what about them," inquired Mrs. O'Brien; "do you dar to mintion them in the same day together?"

"Why not," said the miser; "ay, an' on the same night, too."

Upon my reputaytion, Mr. O'Donovan, you're extremely kind—now be a little more so, and let us undherstand you," said the Bodagh.

"Poor Una," thought John; "all's lost; he will get himself kicked out to a certainty."

"I think it's time we got them married," replied Fardorougha; "the sooner it's done the betther and the safer for both o' them—espeshally for the *colleen*."

"*Dar a Lorha*, he's cracked," said Mrs. O'Brien;

"sarra one o' the poor sowl but's cracked about his money."

"Poor sowl, woman alive! wor you never poor yourself?"

"Yis I wor; an' I'm not ashamed to own it; but, *Chierna*, Frank," she added, addressing her husband, "there's no use in spakin' to him."

"Fardorougha," said O'Brien seriously, "what brought you here?"

"Why, to tell you an' your wife the state that my son, Connor, and your daughter's in about one another; an' to advise you both, if you have sinse, to get them married afore worse happens. It's *your* business more than *mine*."

"You're right," said the Bodagh, aside to his wife; "he's sartinly deranged." "Fardorougha," he added, "have you lost any money lately?"

"I'm losin' every day," said the other; "I'm broke assistin' them that won't thank me, let alone paying me as they ought."

"Then you have lost nothing more than usual?"

"If I didn't, I tell you there's a good chance of losin' it before me;—can a man call any money of his safe that's in another man's pocket?"

"An' so you've come to propose a marriage between your son and my daughter, yet you lost no money, an' you're not mad!"

"Divil a morsel o' me's mad—but you'll be so, if you refuse to let this match go an."

"Out wid him—a *shan roghara*,"* shouted Mrs. O'Brien, in a state of most dignified offence; "*Damnho orth*, you old knave, is it the son of a misert that has fleeced an' robbed the whole counthry side that we 'ud let our daughter, that resaved the finish to her ejjication in a Dubling boordin' school marry wid?—*Vich na hoiah*, this day!"

* The old rogue.

"You had no sich scruple yourself, ma'am," replied the bitter usurer; "when you bounced at the son of the ould Bodagh Buie, an' every one knows what *he* was."

"He!" said the good woman; "an' is it runnin' up comparishments betuxt yourself an' him you are afther! Why, Saint Pether wouldn't thrive on your money, you nager."

"Maybe Saint Pether thruv an worse—but haven't you thruv as well on the ould Bodagh's, as if it had been *honestly* come by; I defy you an' the world both—to say that ever I tuck a penny from any one, more than my right. Lay that to the mimory of the ould Bodagh, an' see if it'll fit. It's no *light guinea*, any how."

Had Fardorougha been a man of ordinary standing and character in the country, from whom an insult *could* be taken, he would no doubt have been by a very summary process expelled the parlour. The history of his querulous and irascible temper, however, was so well known, and his offensive eccentricity of manner, a matter of such established fact, that the father and son, on glancing at each other, were seized with the same spirit, and both gave way to an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"Is it a laughin' stock you're makin' of it?" said Mrs. O'Brien, highly indignant.

"Faith, achora, it may be *no* laughin' stock afther all," replied the Bodagh.

"I think mother," observed John, "that you and my father had better treat the matter with more seriousness. Connor O'Donovan is a young man not to be despised by any person at all near his own class of life who regards the peace and welfare of a daughter. His character stands very high; indeed in every way unimpeachable."

The bitter scowl which had sat upon the small dark features of Fardorougha, when replying to the last attack of Mrs. O'Brien, passed away as John spoke.—The old man turned hastily round, and surveying the eulogist of his son, said,

"God bless you, asthore, for thim words! an they're thrue—thruce as the gospel; arrah what are you both so proud of? I defy you to get the aquil of my son in the barony of Lisnamona, either for face, figure or timper. I say he's fit to be a husband for as good a girl as ever stood in your daughter's shoes; and from what I hear of her, she's as good a girl as ever the Almighty put breath in; God bless you, young man! you're a credit yourself to any paarents."

"An' we have nothin' to say against your son, nor against your wife aither," replied the Bodagh; "an' if your own name was as clear—if you wor looked upon as they are—tut, I'm spakin' nonsense! How do I know whether ever your son and my daughter spoke a word to one another or not?"

"I'll go bail Oona never opened her lips to him," said her mother; "I'll go bail she had more spirit."

"I'll go bail she can't live widout him, an' will have him whether *you* like it or not," said Fardorougha.

"Mother," observed John, "will you and my father come into the next room for a minute—I wish to say a word or two to each of you; and will you, Fardorougha, have the goodness to sit there till we return?"

"Divil a notion," replied O'Donovan, "I have of stirrin' my foot till the thing's settled one way or other."

"Now" said young O'Brien, when they had got into the back parlour, "it's right that you both should know to what length the courtship between Una and Connor O'Donovan has gone."

"Coortship! *Vick na hoiah!* sure she wouldn't go to coort wid the son o' that ould schamer."

"I'm beginning to fear that it's too thrue," observed the Bodagh: "and if she has—but let us hear John."

"It's perfectly true, indeed, mother, that she *has*," said the son. "Yes, and they are both this moment pledged, betrothed, promised, *solemnly* promised to each other; and in my opinion the old man within is

acting a more natural part than either of you give him credit for."

"Well, well, well," exclaimed the mother; "who after that would ever thrust a daughter? The girl that we reared up as tindhers as a chicking, to go to throw herself away upon the son of ould Fardorougha Donovan, the misert. Confusion to the ring he'll ever put an her! I'd see her *stretched** first."

"I agree with you in that, Bridget," said the husband; "if it was only to punish her thrachery and desate, I'll take good care a ring will never go on them—but how do you know all this, John?"

"From Una's own lips, father."

The Bodagh paced to and fro in much agitation; one hand in his small-clothes pocket, the other twirling his watch key as rapidly as he could. The mother, in the mean time, had thrown herself into a chair, and gave way to a violent fit of grief.

"And you have this from Una's own lips?"

"Indeed, father, I have; and it is much to her credit that she was candid enough to place such confidence in her brother."

"Pledged and promised to one another! Bridget, who could believe this?"

"Believe it! I don't believe it—it's only a schame of the hussey to get him. Oh, thin, Queen of heaven, this day, but it's black news to us!"

"John," said his father, "tell Una to come down to us."

"Father, I doubt that's rather a trying task for her. I wish you wouldn't insist."

"Go off, sir, she must come down immediately. I'll have it from her own lips, too."

Without another word of remonstrance the son went to bring her down. When the brother and sister entered the room, O'Brien still paced the floor. He

* Dead.

H

stood, and turning his eyes upon his daughter with severe displeasure, was about to speak, but he appeared to have lost the power of utterance; and after one or two ineffectual attempts, the big tears fairly rolled down his cheeks.

"See, see," said the mother, "see what you have brought us to! Is it throe that you're promised to Fardoroughia's son?"

Una tottered over to a chair, and the blood left her cheeks; her lips became dry, and she gasped for breath.

"Why, don't you think it worth your while to answer me?" continued the mother.

The daughter gave a look of deep distress and supplication at her brother; but when she perceived her father in tears, her head sank down upon her bosom.

"What! what! Una," exclaimed the Bodagh, "Una——" But ere he could complete the question the timid creature fell senseless upon the floor.

For a long time she lay in that friendly trance; for such in truth it was to a delicate being, subjected to an ordeal so painful as that she was called upon to pass through. We have, indeed, remarked that there is in the young, especially in those of the softer sex, a feeling of terror, and shame, and confusion, when called upon by their parents to disclose a forbidden passion, that renders its avowal perhaps the most formidable task which the young heart can undergo. It is a fearful trial for the youthful, and one which parents ought to conduct with surpassing delicacy and tenderness, unless they wish to drive the ingenuous spirit into the first steps of falsehood and deceit.

"Father," said John, "I think you may rest satisfied with what you witness; and I am sure it cannot make you or my mother happy to see poor Una miserable."

Una, who had been during the greater part of her

swoon supported in her weeping and alarmed mother's arms, now opened her eyes, and after casting an affrighted look about the room, she hid her face in her mother's bosom, and exclaimed, as distinctly as the violence of sobbing grief would permit her:

"Oh, mother dear, have pity on me; bring me up stairs and I will tell *you*."

"I do, I do pity you," said the mother, kissing her; "I know you'll be a good girl yet, Oona."

"Una," said her father, placing his hand gently on her shoulder, "was I ever harsh to you, or did I——"

"Father dear," she returned, interrupting him, "I would have told you and my mother, but that I was afraid."

There was something so utterly innocent and artless in this reply, that each of the three persons present felt sensibly affected by its extreme and childlike simplicity.

"Don't be afraid of me, Una," continued the Bodagh, "but answer me truly, like a good girl; and I swear upon my reputaytion that I won't be angry. Do you love the son of this Fardorougha?"

"Not, father, because he's Fardorougha's son," said Una, whose face was still hid in her mother's bosom; "I would rather he wasn't."

"But you *do* love him?"

"For three years he has scarcely been out of my mind."

Something that might be termed a smile crossed the countenance of the Bodagh at this intimation.

"God help you, for a foolish child," said he; "you're a poor counsellor when left to defend your own cause."

"She won't defend it by a falsehood, at all events," observed her trustworthy and affectionate brother.

"No, she wouldn't," said the mother; "and I did her wrong awhile ago to say that she'd schame any thing about it."

"And are you and Connor O'Donovan promised to each other?" inquired the father again.

"But it wasn't *I* that proposed the promise," returned Una.

"Oh, the desperate villain," exclaimed her father, "to be guilty of such a thing! but you took the promise Una—you did—you did—I needn't ask."

"No," replied Una.

"No!" re-echoed the father; "then you did *not* give the promise."

"I mean," she rejoined, "that you needn't ask."

"Oh, faith, that alters the case extramely. Now Una, this—all this promising that has past betune you and Connor O'Donovan is mere folly. If you prove to be the good obadient girl that I hope you are, you'll put him out of your head, and thin you can give back to one another whatever promises you made."

This was succeeded by a silence of more than a minute. Una at length arose, and with a composed energy of manner, that was evident by her sparkling eye and bloodless cheek, she approached her father, and calmly kneeling down, said slowly but firmly:

"Father, if *nothing else* can satisfy you, *I will* give back my promise; but then, father, it will break my heart, for I know—I feel—how I love him, and how I'm loved by him."

"I'll get you a better husband," replied her father,—"far more wealthy and more respectable than he is."

"I'll give back the promise," said she; "but the man is not living, except Connor O'Donovan, that will ever call me wife. More wealthy! more respectable!—oh, it was only *himself* I loved. Father, I'm on my knees before you, and before my mother; I have only one request to make—oh, don't break your daughter's heart!"

"God direct us," exclaimed her mother; "it's hard

to know how to act. If it would go so hard upon her, sure——.”

“Amen,” said her husband; “may God direct us to the best! I’m sure God knows,” he continued, now much affected, “that I would rather break my own heart than yours, Una. Get up, dear—rise. John, how would you advise us?”

“I don’t see what serious objection after all,” replied the son, “either you or my mother can have to Connor O’Donovan. He is every way worthy of her, if he is equal to his character; and as for wealth, I have often heard it said that his father was a richer man than yourself.”

“After all,” said the mother, “she might be very well wid him.”

“I’ll tell you what I’ll do then,” said the Bodagh, “let us see the ould man himself, and if he settles his son dacently in life, as he can do if he wishes, why I won’t see that poor, foolish, innocent girl breaking her heart.”

Una, who sat with her face still averted, now ran to her father, and throwing her arms about his neck, wept aloud, but said nothing.

“Ay, ay,” said the latter, “it’s very fine now that you have every thing your own way, you girsha: but, sure, you’re all the daughter we have, achora; and it would be too bad not to let you have a *little* of your own opinion in the choice of a husband. Now go up stairs, or where you please, till we see what can be done with Fardorougha himself.”

With smiling face, and glistening eyes, Una passed out of the room, scarcely sensible whether she walked, ran, or flew, while the others went to renew the discussion with Fardorougha.

“Well,” said the miser, “you found out, I suppose, that she can’t do widout him?”

“Provided we consint to the marriage,” asked the Bodagh, “how will you settle your son in life?”

"Who would I settle in life, if I wouldn't settle my only son?" replied the other; "who else is there to get all I have?"

"That's very true," observed the Bodagh; "but state plainly what you'll do for him on his marriage."

"Do you consent to the marriage all of yez?"

"That's not the question," said the other.

"Divil a word I'll answer, till I know whether yees do or not," said Fardoroughha. "Say at once that you consent, and thin I'll spake—I'll say what I'll do."

The Bodagh looked inquiringly at his wife and son. The latter nodded affirmatively. "We do consent," he added.

"That shows your own sinse," said the old man. "Now what fortune will you portion your *colleen* wid?"

"That depinds on what *you'll* do for your son," returned the Bodagh.

"And that depends upon what *you'll* do for your daughter," replied the sagacious old miser.

"At this rate we're not likely to agree."

"Nothin's asier; you have only to spake out; besides, it's your business, bein' the colleen's father."

"Try him, and name something fair," whispered John.

"If I give her a farm of thirty acres of good land, stocked and all, what will *you* do for Connor?"

"More than that, five times over; I'll give him all I have. An' now when will we marry them? Throth it was best to make things clear," added the knave, "and undherstand one another at wanst. When will we marry them?"

"Not till you say out openly and fairly the exact sum of money you'll lay down on the nail—an' that before ever a ring goes upon them."

"Give it up, acushla," said the wife, "you see there's no schrewin' a promise out of him, let alone a penny."

"What 'ud ye have me do?" said the old man, raising his voice. "Won't he have all I'm worth? Who

else is to have it? Am I to make a beggar of myself to please you? Can't they live on your farm till I die, an' thin it'll all come to them?"

"And no thanks to you for that, Fardorougha," said the Bodagh. "No, no; I'll never buy a pig in a poke. If you won't act ginerously by your son, go home in the name of goodness, and let us hear no more about it."

"Why, why," said the miser, "are yez mad to miss what I can lave him? If you knew how much it is, you'd anap——; but, God help me, what am I sayin'? I'm poorer than any body thinks. I am—I am; an' will starve among you all, if God hasn't sed it. Do you think I don't love my son as well, an' a thousand times better than you do your daughther? God alone sees how my heart's in him—in my own Connor, that never gave me a sore heart—my brave, my dutiful boy!"

He paused, and the scalding tears here ran down his shrunk and furrowed cheeks, whilst he wrung his hands, started to his feet, and looked about him like a man encompassed by dangers that threatened instant destruction.

"If you love your son so well," said John mildly, "why do you grudge to share your wealth with him? It is but natural, and it is your duty."

"Natural! what's natural?—to give away—is it to love him you mane? It is, it's unnatural to give it away. He's the best son—the best—what do you mane, I say?—let me alone—let me alone—I could give my blood, my blood to sich a boy; but, you want to kill me—you want to kill me, an' thin you'll get all; but he'll cross you, never fear—my boy will save me—he's not tired o' me—he'd give up fifty girls sooner than see a hair of his father's head injured—so do your best; while I have Connor I'm not afraid of yez. Thanks be to God that sent him," he exclaimed, "oh thanks be to God that sent him to comfort an' protect his father from the achames and villany of them that 'ud bring him to starvation for their own ends!"

"Father," said John, in a low tone, "this struggle between avarice and natural affection is awful. See how his small grey eyes glare, and the froth rises white to his thin shrivelled lips. What is to be done?"

"Fardoroughia," said the Bodagh, "it's over; don't distress yourself—keep your money—there will be no match between our childre."

"Why? why won't there?" he screamed—"why won't there, I say? Haven't *you* enough for them until *I* die? Would you see your child breakin' her heart? Bodagh, you have no nathur in you—no bowels for your *colleen dhas*. But I'll spake for her—I'll argue wid you till this time to-morrow, or I'll make you show feelin' to her—an' if you don't—if you don't——"

"Wid the help o' God, the man's as mad as a March hare," observed Mrs. O'Brien, "and there's no use in losin' breath wid him."

"If it's not insanity," said John, "I know not what it is."

"Young man," proceeded Fardoroughia, who evidently paid no attention to what the mother and son said, being merely struck by the voice of the latter—"young man, you're kind, you have sinse and feelin'—spake to your father—don't let him destroy his child—don't ax him to starve me, that never did him harm. He loves you—he loves you, for he can't but love you—sure, I know how I love my own darlin' boy; oh, spake to him—I'll go down on my two knees to you, to beg, as you hope to see God in heaven, that you'll make him not brake his daughter's heart! She's your own sisther—there's but the two of yez, an' oh, don't desart her in this throuble—this heavy, heavy throuble!"

"I won't interfere farther in it," replied the young man, who, however, felt disturbed and anxious in the extreme.

"Mrs. O'Brien," said he, turning imploringly, and with a wild haggard look to the Bodagh's wife,

"I'm turnin' to you—you're her mother—oh think, think——."

"I'll think no more about it," she replied. "You're mad, an' thank God, we know it. Of coorse it 'ill run in the family, for which reasing my daughther 'ill never be joined to the son of a madman."

He then turned as a last resource to O'Brien himself. "Bodagh—Bodagh, I say:" here his voice rose to a frightful pitch: "I enthrate, I ordher, I command you to listen to me! Marry them—don't kill your daughter, an' don't, don't, don't dare to kill my son. If you do I'll curse you till the marks of your feet will scorch the ground you tread on. Oh," he exclaimed, his voice now sinking, and his reason awaking, apparently from exhaustion, "what is come over me? what am I sayin'?—but it's all for my son, my son." He then sat down, and for more than twenty minutes wept like an infant, and sobbed, and sighed, as if his heart would break.

A feeling very difficult to be described hushed his amazed auditory into silence: they felt something like pity towards the unfortunate old man, as well as respect for that affection which struggled with such moral heroism against the frightful vice that attempted to subdue this last surviving virtue in the breast of the miser.

On his getting calm, they spoke to him kindly, but in firm and friendly terms communicated their ultimate determination, that in consequence of his declining to make an adequate provision for his son, the marriage could by no means take place. He then got his hat, and attempted to go to the road which led to the little lawn, but so complete was his abstraction, and so exhausted his faculties, that it was not without John's assistance he could reach the gate which lay before his eyes. He first turned out of the walk to the right, then crossed over to the left, and felt surprised that a wall opposed him in each direction.

"You are too much disturbed," said John, "to perceive the way, but I will show you."

"I suppose I thought it was at home I was," he replied, "bekase at my own house one must turn aither to the right or to the left, as, indeed, I'm in the custom of doin'."

CHAPTER VII.

WHILE Fardorougha was engaged upon this ill-managed mission, his wife, who felt that all human efforts at turning the heart of her husband from his wealth must fail, resolved to have recourse to a higher power. With this purpose in view, she put on her Sunday dress, and informed Connor that she was about to go for a short time from home.

"I'll be back if I can," she added, "before your father comes; and indeed it's as good not to let him know any thing about it."

"About what, mother? for I know as little about it as he does."

"Why, dear, I'm goin' to get a couple o' masses sed, for God to turn his heart from that cursed *airaghid* it's fixed upon. Sure it houlds sich a hard grip of his poor sowl, that it'll be the destruction of him here an' hereafter. It'll kill him afore his time, an' then I thrimble to think of his chance above."

"The object is a good one sure enough, an' it bein' for a spiritual purpose, I suppose the priest won't object to it."

"Why would he, dear, an' it for the good of his sowl. Sure, when Pat Lanigan was jealous, his wife got three masses sed for him; an' wid the help of God, he was cured sound an' clean."

Connor could not help smiling at this extraordinary cure for jealousy, nor at the simple piety of a heart, the strength of whose affection he knew so well. After her return she informed the son, that in addition to the masses to be said against his father's avarice, she had some notion of getting another said towards his marriage with Una.

"I was goin'," she proceeded, "to alip it in along

wid your father's business, but I thought it wouldn't be fair or honest to trick his reverence that way upon the bare price of the two he is to say ; for aldough it 'ud be killin' two birds wid one stone, still it mightn't bring about the match in regard o' the roguery on *my* part."

"God help you, mother," said Connor, laughing ; "for I think you one of the innocentest women that ever lived ; but whisht !" he added, "here's my father—God grant that he may bring good news !"

When Fordorougha entered he was paler or rather sallow than usual ; and on his thin, puckered face, the lines that marked it were exhibited with a distinctness greater than ordinary. His eyes appeared to have sunk back more deeply into his head ; his cheeks had fallen farther into his jaws ; his eye was gleamy and disturbed ; and his whole appearance bespoke trouble and care, and the traces of a strong and recent struggle within him.

"Father," said Connor, with a beating heart, "for heaven's sake, what news—what tidings ? I trust—I trust in God it's good."

"They have no bowels, Connor—they have no bowels, thim O'Briens."

"Then you didn't succeed."

"The father's as great a *bodagh* as him he was called afther—they're a bad pack—an' you musn't think of any one belongin' to them."

"But tell us, man dear," said the wife, "what passed—let us know it all."

"Why, they would do nothin'—they wouldn't hear of it. I went on my knees to them—ay to every one of them, barrin' the colleen herself : but 'twas all no use—it's to be no match."

"And why, father, did you go on your knees to *any* of them ?" said Connor ; "I'm sorry you did *that*."

"I did it on your account, Connor, an' I'd do it agin on your account, poor boy."

"Well, well, it can't be helped."

"But tell me, Fardorougha," inquired Honor, "was any of the fault your own—what did *you* offer to do for Connor?"

"Let me alone," said he, peevishly; "I won't be crass-questioned about it. My heart's broke among you all—what did *I* offer to do for Connor? The match is knocked up I tell you—and it must be knocked up. Connor's young, an' it'll be time enough for him to marry this seven years to come."

As he said this, the fire of avarice blazed in his eyes, and he looked angrily at Honor, then at the son; but while contemplating the latter, his countenance changed from anger to sorrow, and from sorrow to a mild and serene expression of affection.

"Connor, avick," said he, "Connor, sure you'll not blame *me* in this business? sure you won't blame your poor, heart-broken father, let thim say what they will—sure you won't, avilish?"

"Don't fret on my account, father," said the son; "why should I blame you? God knows you're *strivin'* to do what you would wish for me."

"No, Honor, I knew he wouldn't," he shouted, rising up, "he wouldn't make a saycrifize o' me! Connor, save me, save me," he shrieked, throwing his arms about his neck; "save me, my heart's breakin'; somethin's tearin' me different ways inside; I can cry, you see; I can cry, but I am still as hard as a stone; it's terrible this I'm sufferin'—terrible all out for a weak ould man like me. Oh, Connor, avick, what 'ill I do? Honor, achora, what 'ill become o' me; amn't I strugglin', strugglin' aginst it, whatever it is; don't yez pity me? don't ye, avick machree, don't ye, Honor? oh, don't yez pity me?"

"God pity you!" said the wife, bursting into tears; "what will become of you? pray to God, Fardorougha, pray to him. No one alive can change your heart but God. I wint to the priest to-day, to get two masses

said to turn your heart from that cursed money. I didn't intend to tell you, but I do, bekase it's your duty to pray now, above all times, an' to back the priest as well as you can."

"It's the best advice, father, you could get," said the son, as he helped the trembling old man to his seat.

"An' who bid you thin to go to lavish money that way?" said he, turning snappishly to Honor, and relapsing again into the peevish spirit of avarice; "Saver o' Heaven, but you'll kill me, woman, afore you have done wid me. How can I stand it, to have my hard-earned—an' for what? to turn *my* heart from money! I don't want to be turned from it—I don't wish it! Money!—I have no money; nothin', nothin'; an' if there's not better decreed for me, I'll be starved yet; an' is it any wondher? to be robbin' me the way you're doin'!"

His wife clasped her hands, and looked up towards heaven in silence, and Connor, shaking his head despairingly, passed out to seek Flanagan, with whom he had not spoken that day. Briefly, and with a heavy heart, he communicated to him the unsuccessful issue of his father's interference, and asked his opinion as to how he should conduct himself under circumstances so disastrous to his happiness and prospects. Bartle advised him to seek another interview with Una, and for that purpose, offered, as before, to ascertain in the course of that evening at what time and place she would see him. This suggestion, in itself so natural, was adopted, and as Connor felt with peculiar acuteness the pain of the situation in which he was placed, he manifested little tendency to conversation, and the evening, consequently, passed heavily and in silence.

Dusk however arrived, and Bartle prepared himself to execute the somewhat difficult commission he had so obligingly undertaken. He appeared, however, to have

caught a portion of Connor's despondency, for, when about to set out he said "that he felt his spirits sunk and melancholy; just," he added, "as if some misfortune, Connor, was afore either or both of us: for my part, I'd stake my life that things will go *ashaughran** one way or other, an' that you'll never call Una O'Brien your wife."

"Bartle," replied the other, "I only want you to do my message, an' not to be prophesyin' ill; bad news comes too soon, without your tellin' us of it afore hand. God knows, Bartle dear, I'm distressed enough as it is, and want my spirits to be kept up rather than put down."

"No, Connor, but you want somethin' to turn your mind off of this business altogether for a while; an' upon my saunnies it 'ud be a charity for some friend to give you a fresh piece of fun to think of; so keep up your heart, how do you know but I may do that much for you myself? But I want you to lend me the loan of a pair of shoes; divil a tatther of these will be together soon, barrin' I get them mended in time; you can't begrudge that, any how, an' me wearin' them on your own business."

"Nonsense, man; to be sure I will; stop an' I'll bring them out to you in half a shake."

He accordingly produced a pair of shoes, nearly new, and told Bartle that if he had no objection to accept of them as a present, he might consider them as his own.

This conversation took place in Fardorougha's barn, where Flanagan always slept, and kept his small deal trunk.

He paused a moment when this good natured offer was made to him, but as it was dark no particular expression could be discovered on his countenance.

"No!" said he vehemently; "may I go to perdition

* Astray.

if I ought:—Connor—Connor O'Donovan—you'd turn the div——"

"Hut, Bartle, don't be angry—when I offered them, I didn't mean to give the slightest offence ; it's enough for you to tell me you won't have them, without gettin' into a passion."

"Have what ? what are you spakin' about ?"

"Why—about the shoes ; what else ?"

"Yes, faith, sure enough—well, ay, the shoes !—don't think of it, Connor—I'm hasty ; too much so, indeed, an' that's my fault. I'm like all good natured people in that respect ; however, I'll borry them for a day or two, till I get my own patched up some way. But, death alive, why did you get, at this season o' the year, three rows of sparables in the soles o' them ?" he asked, running his fingers along the soles as he spoke.

"Bekase they last longer of coorse ; and now, Bartle, be off, and don't let the grass grow under your feet till I see you agin."

Connor's patience, or rather his impatience that night was severely taxed. Hour after hour elapsed, and yet Bartle did not return. At length he went to his father's sleeping room, and informed him of the message he had sent through Flanagan to Una.

"I will sleep in the barn to-night, father," he added, "an' never fear, let us talk as we may, but we'll be up early enough in the morning, plase God. I couldn't sleep, or go to sleep, till I hear what news he brings back to me ; so do you rise and secure the door, an' I'll make my shake down wid Bartle for this night."

The father, who never refused him any thing unpecuniary, (if we may be allowed the word,) did as the son requested him, and again went to bed, unconscious of the thundercloud which was so soon to burst upon them both.

Bartle, however, at length returned, and Connor had

the satisfaction of hearing that his faithful Una would meet him the next night, if possible, at the hour of twelve o'clock in her father's haggard. Her parents, Bartle told him, had laid an injunction upon her never to see him again; she was watched too, and unless when the household were asleep, she found it altogether impracticable to effect any appointment whatsoever with her lover. She could not even promise with certainty to meet him on that night, but she desired him to come, and if she failed to be punctual, not to leave the place of appointment for at least an hour. After that, if she appeared not, then he was to wait no longer. Such was the purport of the message which *Flanagan* delivered him.

Flanagan was the first up the next morning, for the purpose of keeping an appointment which *he* had with Biddy Nulty, whom we have already introduced to the reader. On being taxed with meanness by this weak but honest creature, for having sought service with the man who had ruined his family, he promised to acquaint her with the true motive which had induced him to enter into Fardorougha's employment. Their conversation on this point, however, was merely a love scene, in which Bartle attempted to satisfy her that to an attachment for herself of some months' standing, might be ascribed his humiliation in becoming a servant to the oppressor and destroyer of his house. He then passed from themselves and their prospects to Connor and Una O'Brien, with whose affection for each other, as the reader knows, he was first made acquainted by his fellow-servant.

"It's terrible, Biddy," said he, "to think of the black and revengeful heart that Connor bears to Bodagh Buie and his family, merely bekase they refuse to let him marry Una. I'm afeard, Biddy darlin', that there'll be dark work about it on Connor's side; an' if you hear of any thing bad happenin' to the Bodagh, you'll know where it comes from."

"I don't b'lieve it, Bartle, nor I won't b'lieve it—not, any way, till I hear that it happens. But what is it he intends to do to them?"

"That's more than I know myself," replied Bartle; "I axed as much, an' he said till it was done, nobody would be the wiser."

"That's quare," said the girl, "for a bettther heart than Connor has God never made."

"You think so, agra, but wait; do you watch, and you'll find that he won't come in to-night. I know nothin' myself of what he's about, for he's as close as his father's purse, an' as deep as a draw-well, ay, an' as fair-faced as the devil, when the ould boy wants to tempt a priest; but this I know, that he has black business on his hands, whatever it is. Be the crass, I tremble to think of it!"

Flanagan then got tender, and after pressing his suit with all the eloquence he was master of, they separated, he to his labour in the fields, and she to her domestic employment, and the unusual task of watching the motions of her master's son.

Flanagan, in the course of the day, suggested to Connor the convenience of sleeping that night *also* in the barn. The time of meeting, he said, was too late, and his father's family, who were early in their hours both night and morning, would be asleep even before they set out. He also added, that lest any of the O'Briens or their retainers should surprise him and Una, he had made up his mind to accompany him, and act as a *vidette* during their interview.

Connor felt this devotion of Bartle to his dearest interests, as every grateful and generous heart would.

"Bartle," said he, "when we are married, if it's ever in my power to make you *aisy* in life, may I never prosper if I don't do it; at all evints, in some way I'll reward you."

"If you're ever able, Connor, I'll have no objection to be behouldin' to you: that is, if you're *ever able*, as you say."

"And if there's a just God in heaven, Bartle, who sees my heart, however things may go against me for a time, I say I *will* be able to sarve you, or any other friend that desarves it. But about sleepin' in to-night—of coorse I wouldn't be knockin' up my father, and disturbin' my poor mother for no rason; so of coorse, as I said, I'll sleep in the barn: it makes no difference one way or other."

"Connor," said Flanagan, with much solemnity, "if Bodagh Buie's wise, he'll marry you an' his daughter as fast as he can."

"An' why, Bartle?"

"Why, for rasons you know nothin' about. Of late he's got very much out o' favour, in regard of not comin' in to what *people* wish."

"Spake plainer, Bartle; I'm in the dark now."

"There's work goin' on in the counthry, that you and every one like you ought to be up to; but you know nothin', as I said, about it. Now Bodagh Buie, as far as I hear—for I'm in the dark myself nearly as much as you—Bodagh Buie houlds out against them: an' not only that, I'm tould, but gives them hard words, an' sets them at defiance."

"But what has all this to do with me marryin' his daughter?"

"Why, he wants some one badly to stand his friend wid *them*; an' if you were married to her, you would on his account become one o' them; begad as it is you ought, for to tell you the truth there's talk—strong talk too, about payin' him a nightly visit that mayn't sarve him."

"Then, Bartle, you're consarned in this business."

"No, faith, not yet; but I suppose I must, if I wish to be *safe* in the counthry; an' so must you too for the same rason."

"And, if not up, how do you know so much about it?"

"From one o' themselves that wishes the Bodagh

well; ay, an' let me tell you, that he's a *marked man*, an' the night was appointed to visit him: still it was put back to thry if he could be managed, but he couldn't; an' all I know about it is that the time to remimber him is settled, an' he's to *get it*, an', along wid other things, he'll be ped for turnin' off—however I can't say any more about *that*."

"How long is it since you knèw this?"

"Not long—only since last night, or you'd 'a got it before this. The best way, I think, to put him on his guard 'ud be to send him a scrape of a line wid no name to it."

"Bartle," replied Connor, "I'm as much behouldin' to you for this, as if it had been myself or my father that was *marked*. God knows you have a good heart, an' if you don't sleep sound, I'm at a loss to know who ought."

"*Ma choirp an' diouol* but it's hard to tell *who* has a good heart, Connor; I'd never say any one has till I'd see them well thried."

At length the hour for setting out arrived, and both, armed with good oaken cudgels, proceeded to Bodagh Buie's haggard, whither they arrived a little before the appointed hour. An utter stillness prevailed round the place—not a dog barked—not a breeze blew, nor did a leaf move on its stem, so calm and warm was the night. Neither moon nor stars shone in the firmament, and the darkness seemed kindly to throw its dusky mantle over this sweet and stolen interview of our young lovers. As yet, however, Una had not come, nor could Connor, on surveying the large massy farm-house of the Bodagh, perceive any appearance of light, or hear a single sound, however faint, to break the stillness in which it slept. Bartle, immediately after their arrival in the haggard, separated from his companion, in order, he said, to give notice of interruption, should Una be either watched or followed.

"Besides, you know," he added, "sweethearts like

nobody to be present but themselves, when they do be speakin' soft to one another. So I'll just keep dogin' about, from place to place, wid my eye an' ear both open, an' if any intherloper comes I'll give yez the hard word."

Heavily and lazily creep those moments during which an impatient lover awaits the approach of his mistress; and wo betide the wooer of impetuous temperament who is doomed, like our hero, to watch a whole hour and a half in vain. Many a theory did his fancy body forth, and many a conjecture did he form as to the probable causes of her absence. Was it possible that they watched her even in the dead hour of night? Perhaps the grief she felt at her father's refusal to sanction the match had brought on indisposition; and,—oh, harrowing thought! perhaps they had succeeded in prevailing upon her to renounce him and his hopes for ever. But no; their affection was too pure and steadfast to admit of a supposition so utterly unreasonable. What then could have prevented her from keeping an appointment so essential to their future prospects, and to the operations necessary for them to pursue? Some plan of intercourse, some settled mode of communication must be concerted between them, a circumstance the necessity of which was as well known to herself as to him.

"Well, well," thought he, "whatever's the reason of her not comin', I'm sure the fault is not her's; at all events, there's nouse in waitin' this night any longer."

Flanagan it appeared was of the same opinion, for in a minute or two he made his appearance, and urged their return home. It was clear, he said, that no interview *could* take place that night, and the sooner they reached the barn and got to bed the better.

"Folly me," he added; "we can pass through the yard, cross the road before the hall-door, and get over the stile, by the near way through the fields that's behind the orchard."

Connor, who was by no means so well acquainted with the path as his companion, followed him in the way pointed out, and in a few minutes they found themselves walking at a brisk pace in a direction that led homeward by a shorter cut. Connor's mind was too much depressed for conversation, and both were proceeding in silence, when Flanagan started in alarm, and pointed out the figure of some one walking directly towards them. In less than a minute the person, whoever he might be, had come within speaking distance, and, as he shouted out "who comes there?" Flanagan bolted across the ditch along which they had been going, and disappeared.

"A friend," returned Connor, in reply to the question.

The other man advanced, and with a look of deep scrutiny peered into his face. "A friend," he exclaimed; "faith, it's a quare hour for a friend to be out. Who are you, eh? Is this Connor O'Donovan?"

"It is: but you have the advantage of me."

"If your father was here he would know Phil Curtis, any way."

"I ought to 'a known the voice myself," said Connor; "Phil, how are you? an' what's bringing *yourself* out at this hour?"

"Why I want to buy a couple o' milch cows in the fair o' Kilturbit, an' I'm goin' to catch my horse an' make ready. It's a stiff ride from this, an' by the time I'm there it'll be late enough for business, I'm thinkin'. There was some one wid you; who was it?"

"Come, come," said Connor good-humourly, "he was out coortin', and doesn't wish to be known; and Phil, as you *had* the luck to meet me, I beg you, for heaven's sake, not to breathe that you seen me near Bodagh Buie's to-night; I have various raisons for it."

"It's no saicret to me as it is," replied Curtis; "half the parish knows it; so make your mind asy on that head. Good night, Connor! I wish you success, any

how ; you'll be a happy man if you get her ; although from what I hear has happened, you have a bad chance, except herself stands to you."

The truth was, that Fardorougha's visit to the Bodagh, thanks to the high tones of his own shrill voice, had drawn female curiosity, already suspicious of the circumstances, to the key-hole of the parlour-door, where the issue and object of the conference soon became known. In a short time it had gone among the servants, and from them was transmitted, in the course of that and the following day, to the tenants and day labourers, who contrived to multiply it with such effect, that, as Curtis said, it was indeed no secret to the greater part of the parish.

Flanagan soon rejoined Connor, who, on taxing him with his flight, was informed, with an appearance of much regret, that a debt of old standing due to Curtis had occasioned it.

"And upon my saunnies, Connor, I'd rather any time go up to my neck in wather than meet a man that I owe money to, whin I can't pay him. I knew Phil very well, even before he spoke, and that was what made me cut an' run."

"What!" said Connor, looking towards the east, "can it be day-light so soon?"

"Begad it surely cannot," replied his companion. "Holy mother above, what is this?"

Both involuntarily stood to contemplate the strange phenomenon which presented itself to their observation ; and, as it was certainly both novel and startling in its appearance, we shall pause a little to describe it more minutely.

The night, as we have already said, was remarkably dark, and warm to an unusual degree. To the astonishment, however, of our travellers, a gleam of light, extremely faint, and somewhat resembling that which precedes the rising of the summer sun, broke upon their path, and passed on in undulating sweeps for a consider-

able space before them. Connor had scarcely time to utter the exclamation just alluded to, and Flanagan to reply to him, when the light around them shot farther into the distance, and deepened from its first pale hue into a rich and gorgeous purple. Its effect, however, was limited within a circle of about a mile, for they could observe that it got faint gradually from the centre to the extreme verge, where it melted into utter darkness.

"This must mean something extraordinary," said Connor; "whatever it is, it appears to be behind the hill that divides us from Bodagh Buie's house. Blessed earth! it looks as if the sky was on fire!"

The sky indeed presented a fearful but sublime spectacle. One spot appeared to glow with the red white heat of a furnace, and to form the centre of a fiery cupola, from which the flame was flung in redder and grosser masses, that darkened away into wild and dusky indistinctness, in a manner that corresponded with the same light, as it danced in red and frightful mirth upon the earth. As they looked, the cause of this awful phenomenon soon became visible. From behind the hill was seen a thick shower of burning particles rushing up into the mid air, and presently the broad point of a huge pyramid of fire, wavering in terrible and capricious power, seemed to disport itself far up in the depths of the glowing sky. On looking again upon the earth they perceived, that this terrible circle was extending itself over a wider circumference of country, marking every prominent object around them with a dark blood-red tinge, and throwing those that were more remote into a visionary but appalling relief.

"*Dhar Chriestha*," exclaimed Flanagan, "I have it; *thim* I spoke about has paid Bodagh Buie the visit they promised him."

"Come round the hip o' the hill," said Connor "till we see where it really is; but I'll tell you what, Bartle, if you be right, wo betide you; all the water in Europe wouldn't wash you free in my mind of bein'

connected in this same Ribbon business that's spread through the country. As sure as that sky—that fearful sky's above us, you must prove to me an' others, how you came to know that this hellish business was to take place. God of heaven! let us run—surely it couldn't be the dwelling-house!”

His speed was so great that Bartle could find neither breath nor leisure to make any reply.

“Thank God,” he exclaimed; “oh thank God it's not the house, and their lives are safe; but, blessed Father, there's the man's whole haggard in flames!”

“Oh, the *netarnal* villains!” was the simple exclamation of Flanagan.

“Bartle,” said his companion, “you heard what I said this minute?”

Their eyes met as he spoke, and for the first time O'Donovan was struck by the pallid malignity of his features. The servant gazed steadily upon him, his lips lightly but firmly drawn back, and his eye, in which was neither sympathy nor alarm, charged with the spirit of a cool and devilish triumph.

Connor's blazed at the bare idea of his villany, and, in a fit of manly and indignant rage, he seized Flanagan and hurled him headlong to the earth at his feet. “You have hell in your face, you villain,” he exclaimed, “an' if I thought that—if I did—I'd drag you down like a dog, and pitch you head foremost into the flames.”

Bartle rose, and in a voice wonderfully calm, simply observed, “God sees, Connor, if I know either your heart or mine, you'll be sorry for this tratement you've given me for no raison. You know yourself that, as soon as I heard any thing of the ill-will against the Bodagh, I tould it to you, in ordher—mark that—in ordher that you might let *him* know it the best way you thought proper, an' for *that* you've knocked me down!”

“Why, I believe you may be right, Bartle—there's

truth in that—but I can't forgive you the *look* you gave me."

"That red light was in my face maybe; I'm sure if that wasn't it, I can't tell—I was myself wondherin' at your own looks, the same way; but then it was that quare light that was in your face."

"Well, well, maybe I'm wrong—I hope I am. Do you think we could be of any use there?"

"Of use! an' how would we account for bein' there at all, Connor? how would *you* do it, at any rate, widout maybe bringin' the girl into blame?"

"You're right agin, Bartle; I'm not half so cool as you are; our best plan is to go home——."

"And go to bed; it is; and the sooner we're there the better; sowl, Connor, you gev me a murdherin' crack."

"Think no more of it—think no more of it—I'm not often hasty, so you must overlook it."

It was, however, with an anxious and distressed heart that Connor O'Donovan reached his father's barn, where, in the same bed with Flanagan, he enjoyed towards morning a brief and broken slumber that brought back to his fancy images of blood and fire, all so confusedly mingled with Una, himself, and their parents, that the voice of his father, calling upon them to rise, came to him as a welcome and manifest relief.

At the time laid in this story, neither burnings nor murders were so familiar as the cowardly and wicked principles arising out of the blighting system of secret combination have since made them. Such atrocities, in those days, were looked upon as criminal and diabolical, even by the people themselves, who were incapable of forming such cruel and malignant plans of atrocious villany as disgrace the present day. The consequence of all this was, that the destruction of Bodagh Buie's property created a sensation in the county, of which, familiarized as *we* are to such crimes, we can entertain but a very faint notion. In three days a reward of five hundred pounds, exclusive of two

hundred from government, was offered for such information as might bring the incendiary, or incendiaries, to justice. The Bodagh and his family were stunned as much with amazement at the occurrence of a calamity so incomprehensible to them; as with the loss they had sustained, for that indeed was heavy. The man, except with the Ribbonmen, was extremely popular, and by many acts of kindness had won the attachment and good-will of all who knew him, either personally or by character. How then account for an act so wanton and vindictive? They could not understand it; it was not only a crime, but a crime connected with some mysterious motive, beyond their power to detect.

But of all who became acquainted with the outrage, not one sympathized more sincerely and deeply with O'Brien's family than did Connor O'Donovan; although of course that sympathy was unknown to those for whom it was felt. The fact was, that his own happiness became in some degree involved in their calamity; and, as he came in to breakfast on the fourth morning after its occurrence, he could not help observing as much to his mother. His suspicions of Flanagan, as to possessing some clue to the melancholly business, were by no means removed. On the contrary, he felt that he ought to have him brought before the bench of magistrates who were conducting the investigation from day to day, and, with this determination, he himself resolved to state fully and candidly to the bench, all the hints which had transpired from Flanagan respecting the denunciations said to be held out against O'Brien, and the causes assigned for them. Breakfast was now ready, and Fardorougha himself entered, uttering petulant charges of neglect and idleness against his servant.

"He deserves *no* breakfast," said he; "not a morsel; it's robbing me by his idleness and schaming he is. What is he doing', Connor? or what has become of him? He's not in the field nor about the place."

Connor paused.

"Why, now that I think of it, I didn't see him to-day," he replied; "I thought he was mendin' the slap at the Three-Acres. I'll thry if he's in the barn."

And he went accordingly to find him. "I'm 'afraid, father," said he, on his return, "that Bartle's a bad boy, an' a dangerous one; he's not in the barn, an' it appears, from the bed, that he didn't sleep there last night. The thruth is, he's gone; at laste he has brought all his clo'es, his box, an' every thing with him; an' what's more, I suspect the raison of it; he thinks he has let out too much to me; an' *dhar ma chorp** it 'ill go hard but I'll make him let out more."

The servant-maid, Biddy, now entered and informed them that four men, evidently strangers, were approaching the house from the rear, and ere she could add any thing further on the subject two of them walked in, and seizing Connor, informed him that he was their prisoner.

"Your prisoner!" exclaimed his mother, getting pale; "why what could our poor boy do to make him your prisoner? He never did hurt or harm to the child unborn."

Fardoroughia's keen grey eye rested sharply upon them for a moment; it then turned to Honor, afterwards to Connor, and again gleamed bitterly at the intruders—"What is this?" said he, starting up; "what is this? you don't mane to rob us?"

"I think," said the son, "you must be under a mistake; you surely can have no business with *me*. It's very likely you want some one else."

"What is your name?" inquired he who appeared to be the principal of them.

"My name is Connor O'Donovan; an' I know no raison why I should deny it."

"Then you are the very man we came for," said the querist, "so you had better prepare to accompany us; in the mean time you must excuse us if we search your

* By my body.

room. This is unpleasant, I grant ; but we have no discretion, and must perform our duty."

"What do you want in his room?" said Fardorougha; "it's robbery you're on for—it's robbery you're on for—in open day-light, too; but you're late; I lodged the last penny yesterday; that's one comfort; you're late—you're late."

"What did my boy do?" exclaimed the affrighted mother; "what did he do, that you come to drag him away from us?"

This question she put to the other constable, the first having entered her son's bed-room.

"I'm afraid, ma'am, you'll know it too soon," replied the man: "it's a heavy charge, if it proves to be a true one."

As he spoke, his companion re-entered the apartment with Connor's Sunday coat in his hand, from the pocket of which he drew a steel and tinder-box.

"I'm sorry for this," he observed; "it corroborates what has been sworn against you by your accomplice, and here I fear comes additional proof."

At the same moment the other two made their appearance, one of them holding in his hand the shoes which Connor had lent to Flanagan, and which he wore on the night of the conflagration.

On seeing this, and comparing the two circumstances together, a fearful light broke on the unfortunate young man, who already felt conscious of the snare into which he had fallen. With an air of sorrow and manly resignation he thus addressed his parents:—

"Don't be alarmed; I see that there is an attempt made to swear away my life; but whatever happens, you both know that I am innocent of doin' an injury to any one. If I die, I would rather die innocent than live as guilty as he will that must have my blood to answer for."

His mother, on hearing this, ran to him, and with her arms about his neck, exclaimed,—

“Die! die! Connor darlin’—my brave boy—my only son—why do you talk about death? what is it for? what is it about? Oh, for the love of God, tell us what did our boy do?”

“He is charged by Bartle Flanagan,” replied one of the constables, “with burning Bodagh Buie O’Brien’s haggard, because he refused him his daughter. He must now come with us to jail.”

“I see the whole plot” said Connor, “and a deep one it is; the villain will do his worst; still I can’t but have dependence upon justice and my own innocence. I can’t but have dependence upon God, who knows my heart.”

CHAPTER VIII.

FARDOROUGH stood amazed and confounded, looking from one to another like a man who felt incapable of comprehending all that passed before him. His forehead, over which fell a few grey thin locks, assumed a deadly paleness, and his eye lost the piercing expression which usually characterized it. He threw his *cothamore* several times over his shoulders, as he had been in the habit of doing when about to proceed after breakfast to his usual avocations, and as often laid it aside, without being at all conscious of what he did. His limbs appeared to get feeble, and his hands trembled as if he laboured under palsy. In this mood he passed from one to another, sometimes seizing a constable by the arm with a hard tremulous grip, and again suddenly letting go his hold of him without speaking. At length a singular transition from this state of mind became apparent; a gleam of wild exultation shot from his eye; his sallow and blasted features brightened; the *cothamore* was buttoned under his chin with a rapid energy of manner, evidently arising from the removal of some secret apprehension.

"Then," he exclaimed, "it's no robbery; it's no robbery; it's no robbery afther all; but how could it? there's no money here; not a penny; an' I'm belied, at any rate; for there's not a poorer man in the barony—thank God, it's not *robbery*!"

"Oh, Fardorougha," said the wife, "don't you see they're goin' to take him away from us!"

"Take who away from us?"

"Connor, your own Connor—our boy—the light of my heart—the light of his poor mother's heart! Oh, Connor, Connor, what is it they're goin' to do to you?"

"No harm, mother, I trust; no harm—don't be frightened."

The old man put his open hands to his temples, which he pressed bitterly, and with all his force, for nearly half a minute. He had, in truth, been alarmed into the very worst mood of his habitual vice, apprehension concerning his money; and felt that nothing, except a powerful effort, could succeed in drawing his attention to the scene which was passing before him.

"What," said he; "what is it that's wrong wid Connor?"

"He must come to jail," said one of the men, looking at him with surprise; "we have already stated the crime for which he stands committed."

"To jail! Connor O'Donovan to jail!"

"It's too true, father; Bartle Flanagan has sworn that I burned Mr. O'Brien's haggard."

"Connor, Connor," said the old man, approaching him as he spoke, and putting his arms composedly about his neck, "Connor, my brave boy, my brave boy, it wasn't you did it; 'twas I did it," he added, turning to the constables; "lave him, lave *him* with her, an' take *me* in his place! Who would if I would not—who ought, I say—an' I'll do it—take me; I'll go in his place."

Connor looked down upon the old man, and as he saw his heart rent, and his reason absolutely tottering, a sense of the singular and devoted affection which he had ever borne him, overcame him, and with a full heart he dashed away a tear from his eye, and pressed his father to his breast,

"Mother" said he, "this will kill the old man; it will kill him!"

"Fardoroughia ahagur," said his wife, feeling it necessary to sustain him as much as possible, "don't take it so much to heart, it won't signify—Connor's innocent, an no harm will happen him."

"But are you lavin' us, Connor? are they—must they bring you to jail?"

"For a while, father; but I won't be long there, I hope."

"It's an unpleasant duty on our part," said the principal of them; "still it's one we must perform. Your father should lose no time in taking the proper steps for your defence."

"And what are we to do?" asked the mother; "God knows the boy's as innocent as I am."

"Yes," said Fardorougha, still dwelling upon the resolution he had made; "I'll stand for you, Connor; you won't go; let them bring *me* instead of you."

"That's out of the question," replied the constable; "the law suffers nothing of the kind to take place; but if you be advised by me, lose no time in preparing to defend him. It would be unjust to disguise the matter from you, or to keep you ignorant of its being a case of life and death."

"Life and death! what do you mane?" asked Fardorougha, staring vacantly at the last speaker.

"It's painful to distress you; but if he's found guilty, it's death."

"Death! hanged!" shrieked the old man, awaking as it were for the first time to a full perception of his son's situation; "hanged! my boy hanged! Connor, Connor, don't go from me!"

"I'll die with him," said the mother; "I'll die with you, Connor. We couldn't live widout him," she added, addressing the strangers; "as God is in heaven we couldn't! Oh Connor, Connor, avourneen, what is it that has come over us, and brought us to this sorrow?"

The mother's grief then flowed on, accompanied by a burst of that unstudied, but pathetic eloquence, which in Ireland is frequently uttered in the tone of wail and lamentation peculiar to those who mourn over the dead.

"No," she added, with her arms tenderly about him,

and her streaming eyes fixed with a wild and mournful look of despair upon his face ; “ no, he is in his loving mother’s arms, the boy that never gave to his father or me a harsh word or a sore heart ! Long were we lookin’ for him, an’ little did we think that it was for this heavy fate that the goodness of God sent him to us ! Oh many a look of lovin’ affection, many a happy heart did he give us ! Many a time, Connor, avillish, did I hang over your cradle, and draw out to myself the happiness and the good that I hoped was before you. You wor too good—too good, I doubt—to be long in sich a world as this ; an’ no wonder that the heart of the fair young colleen, the heart of the colleen *dhas dhun* should rest upon you and love you ; for who ever knew you that didn’t ? Isn’t there enough, King of heaven ! enough of the bad an’ the wicked in this world for the law to punish, an’ not to take the innocent—not to take away from us the only one—the *only one*—I can’t—I can’t—but if they do—Connor—if they do, your lovin’ mother will die with you ! ”

The stern officers of justice wiped their eyes, and were proceeding to afford such consolation as they could, when Fardoroughia, who had sat down after having made way for Honor to recline on the bosom of their son, now rose, and seizing the breast of his coat, was about to speak, but ere he could utter a word he tottered, and would have instantly fallen, had not Connor caught him in his arms. This served for a moment to divert the mother’s grief, and to draw her attention from the son to the husband, who was now insensible. He was carried to the door by Connor ; but when they attempted to lay him in a recumbent posture, it was found almost impossible to unclasp the death-like grip which he held of the coat. His haggard face was shrunk and collapsed ; the individual features sharp and thin, but earnest and stamped with traces of alarm ; his brows, too, which were slightly knit, gave to his whole countenance a character of keen and painful determination. But that

which struck those who were present most, was the unyielding grasp with which he clung even in his insensibility to the person of Connor.

If not an affecting sight it was one at least strongly indicative of the intractable and indurated attachment which put itself forth with such vague and illusive energy on behalf of his son. At length he recovered, and on opening his eyes he fixed them with a long look of pain and distraction upon the boy's countenance.

"Father," said Connor, "don't be cast down—you need not—and you ought not to be so much disheartened—do you feel better?"

When the father heard his voice he smiled; yes—his shrunk, pale, withered face was lit up by a wild, indescribable ecstasy, whose startling expression was borrowed, one would think, as much from the light of insanity as from that of returning consciousness. He sucked in his thin cheeks, smacked his parched skinny lips, and with difficulty called for a drink. Having swallowed a little water, he looked round him with more composure, and inquired—

"What has happened me? am I robbed? are you robbers? But I tell you there's no money in the house. I lodged the last penny yestherday—afore my God I did—but—Oh what am I sayin'? what is this, Connor?"

"Father, dear, compose yourself—we'll get over this trouble."

"We will, darlin'," said Honor, wiping the pale brows of her husband; "an' we won't lose him."

"No, achōra," said the old man; "no, we won't lose him! Connor!"

"Well, father dear?"

"There's a thing here—here"—and he placed his hand upon his heart—"something it is that makes me afeard—a sinkin'—a weight—and there's a strugglin', too, Connor. I know I can't stand it long—an' it's about you—it's *all* about *you*."

"You distress yourself too much, father; indeed you do. Why I hoped that you would comfort my poor mother till I come back to her and you, as I will, please God."

"Yes," he replied; "yes, I will, I will."

"You had better prepare," said one of the officers to Connor; "the sooner this is over the better—he's a feeble man, and not very well able to bear it."

"You are right," said Connor; "I won't delay many minutes; I have only to change my clothes, an' I'm ready."

In a short time he made his appearance dressed in his best suit; and indeed it would be extremely difficult to meet, in any rank of life, a finer specimen of vigour, activity, and manly beauty. His countenance, at all times sedate and open, was on this occasion shaded by an air of profound melancholy that gave a composed grace and dignity to his whole bearing.

"Now, father," said he, "before I go, I think it right to lave you and my poor mother all the consolation I can. In the presence of God, in yours, in my dear mother's, and in the presence of all who hear me, I am as innocent of the crime that's laid to my charge as the babe unborn. That's a comfort for you to know, and let it prevent you from frettin'; and now, good bye; God be with you, and strengthen and support you both!"

Fardoroughia had already seized his hand; but the old man could neither speak nor weep; his whole frame appeared to have been suddenly pervaded by a dry agony that suspended the beatings of his very heart. The mother's grief, on the contrary, was loud, and piercing, and vehement. She threw herself once more on his neck; she kissed his lips, she pressed him to her heart, and poured out as before the wail of a wild and hopeless misery. At length, by the aid of some slight but necessary force, her arms were untwined from about his neck; and Connor, then stooping, embraced his father, and gently placing him upon a settle-bed, bade him farewell!

On reaching the door he paused, and, turning about, surveyed his mother struggling in the hands of one of the officers to get embracing him again, and his grey-haired father sitting in speechless misery on the settle. He stood a moment to look upon them, and a few bitter tears rolled in the silence of manly sorrow down his cheeks.

"Oh, Fardorougha," exclaimed his mother, after they had gone, "sure it isn't merely for partin' wid him that we feel so heartbroken. He may never stand under this roof again, an' he all we have and had to love!"

"No," returned Fardorougha, quietly; "no, it's not, as you say for merely partin' wid him—hanged! God! God! *him*—here—Honor—here—the thought of it—I'll die—it'll break—Oh God support me! my heart—here—my heart 'ill break! My brain, too, and my head—oh! if God 'ud take me before I'd see it! But it can't be—its not possible, that our innocent boy should meet sich a death!"

"No, dear, it is not; sure he's innocent—that's one comfort; but, Fardorougha, as the men said, you must go to a lawyer and see what can be done to defend him."

The old man rose up and proceeded to his son's bedroom.

"Honor," said he, "come here;" and while uttering these words he gazed upon her face with a look of unutterable and helpless distress; "there's his bed, Honor, *his* bed—he may never sleep on it more—he may be cut down like a flower in his youth—and then what will become of us?"

"For ever, from this day out," said the distracted mother, "no hands will ever make it but my own; on no other will I sleep—where *his* head lay there will mine be too—avick machree—machree! Och, Fardorougha, we can't stand this; let us not take it to heart, as we do; let us trust in God, an' hope for the best."

Honor, in fact, found it necessary to assume the office of the comforter ; but it was clear that nothing urged or suggested by her could for a moment win back the old man's heart from a contemplation of the loss of his son. He moped about for a considerable time ; but, ever and anon, found himself in Connor's bed-room, looking upon his clothes and such other memorials of him as it contained.

During the occurrence of these melancholy incidents at Fardorougha's, others of a scarcely less distressing character were passing under the roof of Bodagh Buie O'Brien.

Our readers need not be informed that the charge brought by Bartle Flanagan against Connor, excited the utmost amazement in all who heard it. So much at variance were his untarnished reputation and amiable manners with a disposition so dark and malignant as that which must have prompted the perpetration of such a crime, that it was treated at first by the public as an idle rumour. The evidence, however, of Phil Curtis, and his deposition to the conversation which occurred between him and Connor, at the time and place already known to the reader, together with the corroborating circumstances arising from the correspondence of the foot-prints about the haggard with the shoes produced by the constable—all, when combined together, left little doubt of his guilt. No sooner had this impression become general, than the spirit of the father was immediately imputed to the son, and many sagacious observations made, all tending to show, that, as they expressed it, "the bad drop of the old rogue would sooner or later come out in the young one ;"—"he wouldn't be what he was, or the bitter heart of the miser would appear ;" with many other apothegms of a similar import. The family of the Bodagh, however, were painfully and peculiarly circumstanced. With the exception of Una herself, none of them entertained a doubt that Connor was the incendiary. Flanagan had maintained a good character, and his

direct impeachment of Connor, supported by such exact circumstantial evidence, left nothing to be urged in the young man's defence. Aware as they were of the force of Una's attachment, and apprehensive that the shock arising from the discovery of his atrocity might be dangerous if injudiciously disclosed to her, they themselves resolved, in accordance with the suggestion of their son, to break the matter to her with the utmost delicacy and caution.

"It is better," said John, "that she should hear of the misfortune from us; for after breaking it to her as gently as possible, we can at least attempt to strengthen and console her under it."

"Heaven above sees," exclaimed his mother, "that it was a black and unlucky business to her and to all of us; but now that she knows what a revengeful villain he is, I'm sure she'll not find it hard to banish him out of her thoughts. *Deak Grasthias** for the escape she had from him at any rate!"

"John, bring her in," said the father, "bring the unfortunate young creature in. I can't but pity her, Bridget; I can't but pity *ma colleen voght*."†

When Una entered with her brother she perceived by a glance at the solemn bearing of her parents, that some unhappy announcement was about to be made to her. She sat down therefore with a beating heart and a cheek already pale with apprehension.

"Una," said her father, "we sent for you to mention a circumstance that we would rather you should hear from ourselves than from strangers. You were always a good girl, Una—an obedient girl, and sensible beyant your years; and I trust that your good sinse and the grace of the Almighty will enable you to bear up undher any disappointment that may come upon you."

"Surely, father, there can be nothing worse than I know already," she replied.

* Thanks be to God.

† My poor girl.

"Why, what *do* you know, dear?"

"Only what you told me the day Fardoroughia was here, that nothing agreeable to my wishes could take place."

"I would give a great deal that the business was now as it was even then," responded her father; "there's far worse to come, Una, an' you must be firm an' prepare to hear what'll thry you sorely."

"I can't guess it, father; but for God's sake tell me at once."

"Who do you think burned our property?"

"And I suppose if *she* hadn't been undher the one roof wid us that it's ourselves he'd burn," observed her mother.

"Father, tell me the worst at once—whatever it may be; how could *I* guess the villain or villains who destroyed our property?"

"Villain, indeed; you may well say so." returned the Bodagh. "That villain is no other than Connor O'Donovan."

Una felt as if a weighty burthen had been removed from her heart; she breathed freely; her depression and alarm vanished, and her dark eye kindled into a proud confidence in the integrity of her lover.

"And father," she asked in a full and firm voice, "is there nothing worse than *that* to come?"

"Worse! is the girl's brain turned?"

"*Dhar a Lhora Heena*, she's as mad I believe as ould Fardoroughia himself," said her mother; "*worse!* why she has parted wid all the little reasing she ever had."

"Indeed, mother, I hope I have not, and that my reason's clear as ever; but as to Connor O'Donovan, he's innocent of that charge, and of every other that may be brought against him; I don't believe it, and I never will."

"It's proved against him; it's brought home to him."

"Who is his accuser?"

"His father's servant, Bartle Flanagan, has turned king's evidence."

"The deep-dyed villian!" she exclaimed with indignation; "father, of that crime, so sure as God's in heaven, so sure is Connor O'Donovan innocent, and so sure is Bartle Flanagan guilty. I know it."

"*You* know it—explain yourself."

"I mean *I feel it*—ay, home to the core of my heart—my unhappy heart—I feel the truth of what I say."

"Una," observed her brother, "I'm afraid you have been vilely deceived by him—there's not the slightest doubt of his guilt."

"Don't you be deceived, John; I say he's innocent, as I hope for heaven he's innocent; and father, I'm not a bit cast down or disheartened by any thing I have yet heard against him."

"You're a very extraordinary girl, Una; but for my part I'm glad you look upon it as you do. If his innocence appears, no man alive will be better pleased at it than myself."

"His innocence *will* appear," exclaimed the faithful girl: "it must appear; and, father, mark this—I say, time will tell yet who is innocent and who is guilty. God knows," she added, her energy of manner increasing, while a shower of hot tears fell down her cheeks, "God knows I would marry him to-morrow with the disgrace of that and ten times as much upon him, so certain am I that his heart and his hand are free from thought or deed that's either treacherous or dishonourable."

"Marry him," said her mother, losing temper; "nobody doubts but you'd marry him on the gallows, wid the rope about his neck."

"I would do it, and unite myself to a true heart. Don't mistake me, and, mother dear, don't blame me," she added, her tears flowing still faster; "he's in disgrace—sunk in shame and sorrow—and I won't con-

ceal the force of what I feel for him; I won't desert him now as the world will do; I know his heart, and on the scaffold to-morrow I would become his wife, if it would take away one atom of his misery."

"If he's innocent," said her father, "you have more penetration than any girl in Europe; but if he's guilty of such an act against any one connected with you, Una, the guilt of all the devils in hell is no match for his. Well, you have heard all we wanted to say to you, and you needn't stay."

"As she herself says," observed John, "perhaps time will place every thing in its true light. At present all those who are not in love with him have little doubt of his guilt. However, even as it is, in principle Una is right: putting love out of the question, we should prejudice no one."

"Time will," said the sister, "or rather God will in his own good time. On God I'm sure *he* depends; on his providence I also rely for seeing his name and character cleared of all that has been brought against him. John I wish to speak to you in my own room; not that I intend to make any secret of it, but I want to consult with you first."

"*Cheerna dheelish*," exclaimed the mother; "what a wife that child would make to any one that deserved her!"

"It's more than I'm able to do, to be angry with her," returned the Bodagh. "Did you ever know her to tell a lie, Bridget!"

"A lie; no, nor the shadow of a lie never came out of her lips; the desate's not in her, an' may God look down on her with compunction this day; for there's a dark road I doubt before her!"

"Amen," responded her father: "amen, I pray the Saviour. At all evints, O'Donovan's guilt or innocence will soon be known," he added; "the 'sises begin this day week, so that the business will soon be over either one way or other."

Una, on reaching her own room, thus addressed her affectionate brother:

"Now, John, you know that my grandfather left me four hundred guineas in his will, and you know, too, the impossibility of getting any money out of the clutches of Fardorougha. You must see Connor, and find out how he intends to defend himself. If his father won't allow him sufficient means to employ the best lawyers—as I doubt whether he will or not—just tell him the truth, that whilst I have a penny of these four hundred guineas, he mustn't want money; an' tell him, too, that all the world won't persuade me that he's guilty; say I know him to be innocent, and that his disgrace has made him dearer to me than ever he was before."

"Surely you can't suppose for a moment, my dear Una, that I, your brother, who, by the way, have never opened my lips to him, could deliberately convey such a message."

"It must be conveyed in some manner—I'm resolved on that."

"The best plan," said the other, "is to find out whatsoever attorney they employ, and then to discover, if possible, whether his father has furnished sufficient funds for his defence. If he has your offer is unnecessary; and if not, a private arrangement may be made with the attorney of which nobody else need know any thing."

"God bless you, John; God bless you," she replied; "that is far better; you have been a good brother to your poor Una—to your poor unhappy Una."

She leaned her head on the table, and wept for some time at the trying fate, as she termed it, which hung over two beings so young and so guiltless of any crime. The brother soothed her by every argument in his power, and after gently compelling her to dry her tears, expressed his intention of going early the next day to ascertain whether or not any professional man

had been engaged to conduct the defence of her unfortunate lover.

In effecting this object, there was little time lost on the part of young O'Brien. Knowing that two respectable attorneys lived in the next market town, he deemed it best to ascertain whether Fardorougha had applied to either of them for the purposes aforementioned, or, if not, to assure himself whether the old man had gone to any of those pettifoggers, who rather than appear without practice, will undertake a cause almost on any terms, and afterwards institute a lawsuit for the recovery of a much larger bill of costs than a man of character and experience would demand.

In pursuance of the plan concerted between them, the next morning found him rapping, about eleven o'clock, at the door of an attorney named O'Halloran, whom he asked to see on professional business. A clerk, on hearing his voice in the hall, came out and requested him to step into the back room, adding, that his master, who was engaged, would see him the moment he had despatched the person then with him. Thus shown, he was separated from O'Halloran's office only by a pair of folding doors, through which every word uttered in the office could be distinctly heard; a circumstance that enabled O'Brien unintentionally to overhear the following dialogue between the parties :

"Well, my good friend," said O'Halloran to the stranger, who, it appeared, had arrived before O'Brien only a few minutes, "I am now disengaged; pray let me know your business."

The stranger paused a moment, as if seeking the most appropriate terms in which to express himself.

"It's a black business," he replied, "and the worst of it is, I'm a poor man."

"You should not go to law, then," observed the attorney. "I tell you before hand you will find it very expensive."

"I know it," said the man; "it's open robbery; I know what it cost me to recover the little pences that wor sometimes due to me, when I broke myself lending weeny thrifles to strugglin' people that I thought honest, an' robbed me aftherwards."

"In what way can my services be of use to you at present? for that I suppose is the object of your calling upon me," said O'Halloran.

"Oh thin, sir, if you have the grace of God, or kindness, or pity in your heart, you can sarve me; you can save my heart from breakin'!"

"How—how, man?—come to the point."

"My son, sir, Connor; my only son was taken away from his mother an' me, an' put into jail yestherday mornin', an' he innocent; he was put in, sir, for burnin' Bodagh Buie O'Brien's haggard, an' as God is above, he as much burnt it as you did."

"Then you are Fardorougha Donovan," said the attorney; "I have heard of that, outrage; and to be plain with you, a good deal about yourself. How, in the name of heaven, can you call yourself a poor man?"

"They belie me, sir; they're bitter inemies that say I'm otherwise."

"Be you rich or be you poor, let me tell you that I would not stand in your son's situation for the wealth of the king's exchequer. Sell your last cow; your last coat; your last acre; sell the bed from under you, without loss of time, if you wish to save his life; I tell you that for this purpose you must employ the best counsel, and plenty of them. The assizes commence on this day week, so that you have not a single moment to lose. Think now whether you love your son or your money best."

"Saver of earth, amn't I an unhappy man! every one sayin' I have money, an' me has not! Where would I get it? Where would a man like me get it? Instead o' that I'm so poor that I see plainly I'll starve

yet; I see it's before me! God pity me this day! But agin, there's my boy, my boy; oh God pity him! Say what's the laste, the lowest, the very lowest you could take, for defendin' him; an' for pity's sake, for charity's sake, for God's sake, don't grind a poor, helpless ould man by extortion. If you knew the boy—if you knew him—oh, afore my God, if you knew him, you wouldn't be apt to charge a penny; you'd be proud to sarve sich a boy."

"You wish every thing possible to be done for him, of course?"

"Of coorse, of coorse; but widout exthravagance; as asy an' light on a poor man as you can. You could shorten it, sure, an' lave out a great deal that 'ud be of no use; an' half the paper 'ud do; for you might make the clerks write close—why, very little 'ud be wanted if you wor savin'."

"I can defend him with one counsel if you wish; but if anxious to save the boy's life, you ought to enable your attorney to secure a strong bar of the most eminent lawyers he can engage."

"An' what 'ud it cost to hire three or four o' them?"

"The whole expense might amount to between forty and fifty guineas."

A deep groan of dismay, astonishment, and anguish, was the only reply made to this for some time.

"Oh heavens above," he screamed, what will—what *will* become of me! I'd rather be dead, as I'll soon be, than hear this, or know it at all. How could I get it? I'm as poor as poverty itself; oh couldn't you feel for the boy, an' defend him on trust; couldn't you feel for him?"

"It's your business to do that," returned the man of law, coolly.

"Feel for him; me? oh little you know how my heart's in him; but any way, I'm an unhappy man;

every thing in the world wide goes against me; but—oh my darlin' boy—Connor, Connor, my son, to be tould that I don't feel for you—well you know, avourneen machree—well you know that I feel for you, and 'ud kiss the track of your feet upon the ground. Oh, it's cruel to tell it to me; to say sich a thing to a man that his heart's breakin' widin' him for your sake; but, sir, you sed this minute that you could defend him wid *one* lawyer?"

"Certainly, and with a cheap one, too, if you wish; but in that case, I would rather decline the thing altogether."

"Why? why? sure if you can defend him chapely, isn't it so much saved? isn't it the same as if you defendid it at a higher rate? Sure if one lawyer tells the truth for the poor boy, ten or fifty can do no more; an then maybe they'd crass in an' puzzle one another if you hired too many of them."

"How would you feel, should your son be found guilty? you know the penalty is his life. He will be executed."

O'Brien could hear the old man clap his hands in agony, and in truth he walked about wringing them as if his very heart would burst.

"What will I do?" he exclaimed; "what will I do? I can't lose him, an' I won't lose him; lose him! oh God, oh God, is it to lose the best son and only child that ever man had; wouldn't it be downright murder in me to let him be lost, if I could prevent it. Oh, if I was in his place, what wouldn't he do for me, for the father that he always loved!"

The tears ran copiously down his furrowed cheeks; and his whole appearance evinced such distraction and anguish as could rarely be witnessed.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he added; "I'll give you fifty guineas *after my death* if you defend him properly."

"Much obliged," replied the other; "but in matters of this kind we make no such bargains."

"I'll make it sixty, in case you don't ax it *now*."

"Can you give me security that I'll survive you? Why you are tough looking enough to outlive me."

"Me tough!—no, God help me, my race is nearly run; I won't be alive this day twelve months—look at the differ atween us."

"This is idle talk," said the attorney; "determine on what you'll do; really my time is valuable, and I am now wasting it to no purpose."

"Take the offer—depind on't it'll soon come to you."

"No, no," said the other, coolly; "not at all; we might shut up shop if we made such *post obit* bargains as that."

"I'll tell you," said Fardorougha; "I'll tell you what;" his eyes gleamed with a reddish, bitter light; and he clasped his withered hands together, until the joints cracked, and the perspiration teemed from his pale, sallow features; "I'll tell you," he added—"I'll make it seventy!"

"No."

"Aighty!"

"No."

"Ninety!"—with a husky shriek.

"No, no."

"A hundhre'—a hundhre'—a hundhre'," he shouted; "a hundhre, when I'm gone—*when I'm gone*!"

One solemn and determined No, that precluded all hopes of any such arrangement, was the only reply.

The old man leaped up again, and looked impatiently and wildly and fiercely about him.

"What are you?" he shouted; "what are you?—You're a divil—a born divil. Will nothing but my death satisfy you? Do you want to rob me—to starve me—to murder me? Don't you see the state I'm in by you? look at me—look at these thrimblin' limbs—look at the sweat powerin' down from my poor ould face! What is it you want? There—there's my grey

hairs to you. You have brought me to that—to more than that—I'm dyin' this minute—I'm dyin'—oh, my boy—my boy, if I had you here—ay, I'm—I'm——”

He staggered over on his seat, his eyes gleaming in a fixed and intense glare at the attorney; his hands were clenched, his lips parched, and his mummy-like cheeks sucked, as before, into his toothless jaws. In addition to all this, there was a bitter white smile of despair upon his features, and his thin grey locks that were discomposed in the paroxysm by his own hands, stood out in disorder upon his head. We question indeed whether mere imagination could, without having actually witnessed it in real life, conceive any object so frightfully illustrative of the terrible dominion which the passion of avarice is capable of exercising over the human heart.

“I protest to heaven,” exclaimed the attorney “I believe the man is dying—if not dead, he is motionless.”

“O'Donovan, what's the matter with you?”

The old man's lips gave a dry, hard smack, then became desperately compressed together, and his cheeks were drawn still farther into his jaws. At length he sighed deeply, and changed his fixed and motionless attitude.

“He is alive, at all events,” said one of the young men.

Fardorougha, turned his eyes upon the speaker, then upon his master, and successively upon two other assistants who were in the office.

“What is this?” said he, “what is this?—I'm very weak—will you get me a dhrink o' wather. God help me—God direct me! I'm an unhappy man; get me a dhrink for heaven's sake, I can hardly speak, my mouth and lips are so dry.”

The water having been procured, he drank it eagerly, and felt evidently relieved.

“This business,” he continued, “about the money

—I mane about my poor bey, Connor, how will it be managed, sir?"

"I have already told you that there is but one way of managing it, and that is, as the young man's life is at stake, to spare no cost."

"And I *must* do that?"

"You ought at least; remember that he's an only son, an' that if you lose him——"

"Lose him!—I can't—I couldn't—I'd die—die—dead——"

"By so shameful a death," proceeded O'Halloran, "you will not only be childless, but you will have the bitter fact to reflect on, that he died in disgrace. You will blush to name him! What father would not make any sacrifice to prevent his child from meeting such a fate? It's a trying thing and a pitiable calamity to see a father ashamed to name the child that he loves."

The old man rose, and approaching O'Halloran, said, eagerly, "How much will do? Ashamed to name you, alanna! *Chierna—Chierna*—ashamed to name you, Connor! Oh! if the world knew you, ashore, as well as I an' your poor mother knows you, they'd say that we ought to be proud to hear your name soundin' in our ears. How much will do? for may God strinthen me, I'll do it.

"I think about forty guineas; it may be more, and it may be less, but we will say forty."

"Then I'll give you an ordher for it on a man that's a good mark. Give me a pen an' paper fast."

The paper was placed before him, and he held the pen in his hand for some time, and, ere he wrote, turned a look of deep distress upon O'Halloran.

"God Almighty pity me," said he; "you see—you see that I am a poor heart-broken creature—a ruined man,—I'll be a ruined man!"

"Think of your son, and of his situation."

"It's before me—I know it is—to die like a dog behind a ditch wid hunger, as I'll do yit!"

"Think of your son, I say, and, if possible save him from a shameful death."

"What? Ay—yis—yis, surely—surely—oh, my poor boy—my innocent boy—I will—I *will* do it."

He then sat down, and with a tremulous hand, and lips tightly drawn together, wrote an order on P—— the county treasurer for the money.

O'Halloran, on seeing it, looked alternately at the paper and the man for a considerable time.

"Is P—— your banker?" he asked.

"Every penny that I'm worth he has."

"Then you are a ruined man," he replied, with cool emphasis. "P—— absconded the day before yesterday, and robbed half the county. Have you no loose cash at home?"

"Robbed! who robbed?"

"Why, P—— has robbed every man who was fool enough to trust him; he's off to the Isle of Man, with the county funds in addition to the other prog."

"You don't mane to say," replied Fardorougha, with a hideous calmness of voice and manner; "you *don't*—you *can't* mane to say that he has run off wid *my* money?"

"I do; you'll never see a shilling of it, if you live to the age of a Hebrew patriarch. See what it is to fix the heart upon money. You are now what you wished the world to believe you to be, a poor man."

"Ho, ho," howled the miser, "he darn't, he darn't—wouldn't God conshume him if he robbed the poor—wouldn't God stiffen him, and pin him to the airth, if he attempted to run off wid the hard earnings of strugglin' honest men? Where 'ud God be, an' him to dar to do it? But it's a falsity, an' you're thryin' me to see how I'd bear it—it is, it is, an' may heaven forgive you!"

"It's as true as the gospel," replied the other; "why, I'm surprised you didn't hear it before now—every one knows it—it's over the whole country."

"It's a lie—it's a lie," he howled again: "no one dar to do sich an act. You have some schame in this

—you're not a safe man; you're a villain, an nothin' else; but I'll soon know; which of these is my hat?"

"You are mad, I think," said O'Halloran.

"Get me my hat, I say: I'll soon know it; but sure the world's all in a schame against me—all, all, young an' ould—where's my hat, I say?"

"You've put it upon your head this moment," said the other.

"An' my stick?"

"It's in your hand."

"The curse o' heaven upon you," he shrieked, "whether its thrue or false!" and, with a look that might scorch him to whom it was directed, he shuffled in a wild and frantic mood out of the house.

"The man is mad," observed O'Halloran, "or, if not, he will soon be so; I never witnessed such a desperate case of avarice. If ever the demon of money lurked in any man's soul, it's in his. God bless me! God bless me! its dreadful! Richard, tell the gentleman in the dining-room I'm at leisure to see him."

The scene we have attempted to describe, spared O'Brien the trouble of much unpleasant inquiry, and enabled him to enter at once into the proposed arrangements on behalf of Connor. Of course he did not permit his sister's name to transpire, nor any trace whatever to appear, by which her delicacy might be compromised, or her character involved. His interference in the matter he judiciously put upon the footing of personal regard for the young man, and his reluctance to be even the indirect means of bringing him to a violent and shameful death. Having thus fulfilled Una's instructions, he returned home, and relieved her of a heavy burthen by a full communication of all that had been done.

CHAPTER IX.

THE struggle hitherto endured by Fardorougha was in its own nature sufficiently severe to render his sufferings sharp and pungent; still they resembled the influence of local disease, more than that of a malady which prostrates the strength and grapples with the powers of the whole constitution. The sensation he immediately felt on hearing that his banker had absconded with the gains of his penurious life, was rather a stunning shock that occasioned for the moment a feeling of dull, and heavy, and overwhelming dismay. It filled, nay, it actually distended his narrow soul with an oppressive sense of exclusive misery that banished all consideration for every person and thing extraneous to his individual selfishness. In truth, the tumult of his mind was peculiarly wild and anomalous. The situation of his son, and the dreadful fate that hung over him were as completely forgotten as if they had not existed. Yet there lay underneath his own gloomy agony, a remote consciousness of collateral affection, such as is frequently experienced by those who may be drawn by some temporary and present pleasure, from the contemplation of their misery. We feel in such cases, that the darkness is upon us, even while the image of the calamity is not before the mind; nay, it sometimes requires an effort to bring it back, when anxious to account for our depression; but when it comes, the heart sinks with a shudder, and we feel, that although it ceased to engage our thoughts, we had been sitting all the time beneath its shadow. For this reason, although Fardorougha's own loss absorbed, in one sense, all his powers of suffering, still he knew that *something else* pressed with additional weight upon his heart. Of its distinct character, however, he was ignorant, and only felt that a dead and heavy load of

multiplied affliction bent him in burning anguish to the earth.

There is something more or less eccentric in the gait and dress of every miser. Fardorougha's pace was naturally slow, and the habit for which, in the latter point, he had all his life been remarkable, was that of wearing a great coat thrown loosely about his shoulders. In summer, it saved an inside one, and as he said, kept him cool and comfortable. That he seldom or never put his arms into it arose from the fact that he knew it would last a much longer period of time, than if he wore it in the usual manner.

On leaving the attorney's office, he might be seen creeping along towards the county treasurer's, at a pace quite unusual to him; his hollow gleaming eyes were bent on the earth; his *cothamore* about his shoulders; his staff held with a tight and desperate grip, and his whole appearance that of a man frightfully distracted by the intelligence of some sudden calamity.

He had not preceeded far on this hopeless errand, when many bitter confirmations of the melancholy truth were afforded him by persons whom he met on their return from P——'s residence. Even these, however, were insufficient to satisfy him; he heard them with a vehement impatience, that could not brook the bare possibility of the report being true. His soul clung with the tenacity of a death-grip to the hope that, however others might have suffered, some chance might notwithstanding, still remain in *his* particular favour. In the meantime, he poured out curses of unexampled malignity against the guilty defaulter, on whose head he invoked the Almighty's vengeance with a venomous fervour which appalled all who heard him. Having reached the treasurer's house, a scene presented itself that was by no means calculated to afford him consolation. Persons of every condition, from the squireen and gentleman farmer, to the humble widow, and inexperienced orphan, stood in melancholy groups about

the deserted mansion, interchanging details of their losses, their blasted prospects, and their immediate ruin. The cries of the widow, who mourned for the desolation brought upon her and her now destitute orphans, rose in a piteous wail to heaven, and the industrious fathers of many struggling families, with pale faces and breaking hearts, looked up in silent misery upon the closed shutters and smokeless chimneys of their oppressor's house, bitterly conscious that the laws of the boasted constitution under which they lived, permitted the destroyer of hundreds to enjoy, in luxury and security, the many thousands of which, at one fell and rapacious swoop, he had deprived them.

With white quivering lips, and panting breath, Fardorougha approached and joined them.

"What, what," said he, in broken sentences; "is this throe—can it, can it be throe? Is the thievin' villain gone? Has he robbed us, ruined us, destroyed us?"

"Ay, too throe it is," replied a farmer; "the rip is off to that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man; ay, he's gone! an' may all our bad luck past, present, and to come, go with him, an' all he tuck."

Fardorougha looked at his informant as if he had been P—— himself, he then glared from one to another, whilst the white foam wrought up to his lips by the prodigious force of his excitement. He clasped his hands, then attempted to speak, but language had abandoned him.

"If one is to judge by your appearance, you have suffered heavily," observed the farmer.

The other stared at him with a kind of angry amazement for doubting it, or it might be, for speaking so coolly of his loss.

"Suffered," said he, "ay, ay, but did yez thry the house? we'll see—suffered!—suffered! we'll see."

He immediately shuffled over to the hall-door, which he assaulted with the eagerness of a despairing soul

at the gate of heaven, throwing into each knock such a character of impatience and apprehension, as one might suppose the aforesaid soul to feel from a certain knowledge that the devil's clutches were spread immediately behind, to seize and carry him to perdition. His impetuosity, however, was all in vain; not even an echo reverberated through the cold and empty walls, but on the contrary, every peal was followed by a most unromantic and ominous silence.

"That man appears beside himself," observed another of the sufferers: "surely, if he wasn't half-mad, he'd not expect to find any one in an empty house?"

"Divil a much it signifies whether he's mad or otherwise," responded a neighbour; "I know him well; his name's Fardoroughia Donovan, the miser of Lisnamona, the biggest shkrew that ever skinned a flint. If P—— did nothin' worse than fleece *him*, it would never stand between him an' the blessin' o' heaven."

Fardoroughia, in the mean time, finding that no response was given from the front, passed hurriedly by an archway into the back court, where he made similar efforts to get in by attempting to force the kitchen door. Every entrance, however, had been strongly secured; he rattled, and thumped, and screamed, as if P—— himself had actually been within hearing, but still to no purpose, he might as well have expected to extort a reply from the grave.

When he returned to the group that stood on the lawn, the deadly conviction that all was lost affected every joint of his body with a nervous trepidation, that might have been mistaken for *delirium tremens*. His eyes were full of terror, mingled with the impotent fury of hatred and revenge; whilst over all now predominated for the first time such an expression of horror and despair, as made the spectators shudder to look upon him.

"Where was God," said he, addressing them, and his voice naturally thin and wiry, now became husky and hollow; "where was God to suffer this? to suffer the poor to be ruined, and the rich to be made poor? Was it right for the Almighty to look on an' let the villain do it? No—no—no; I say no!"

The group around him shuddered at the daring blasphemy to which his monstrous passion had driven him. Many females, who were in tears, lamenting audibly, started, and felt their grief suspended for a moment by this revolting charge against the justice of Providence.

"What do you all stand for here," he proceeded, "like stocks an' stones? Why don't yez kneel with me, an' let us join in one curse; one, no, but let us shower them down upon him in thousands—in millions; an' when we can no longer *spake* them, let us *think* them. To the last hour of my life my heart 'ill never be widout a curse for him; an' the last word afore I go into the presence of God 'ill be a black heavy blessin' from hell against him an' his, sowl an' body, while a drop o' their bad blood's upon earth."

"Don't be blasphemin', honest man," said a bystander; "if you've lost your money, that's no reason why you should fly in the face o' God for P——'s roguery. Divil a one o' myself cares if I join you in a volley against the robbin' scoundrel, but I'd not take all the money the rip ran away wid, an' spake of God as you do."

"Oh Saver!" exclaimed Fardorougha, who probably heard not a word he said; "I knew—I knew—I always felt it was before me—a dog's death behind a ditch—my tongue out wid starvation and hunger, and it was he brought me to it!"

He had already knelt, and was uncovered, his whiteish hair tossed by the breeze in confusion about a face on which was painted the fearful workings of that giant spirit, under whose tremendous grasp he writhed and

suffered like a serpent in the talons of a vulture. In this position, with uplifted and trembling arms, his face raised towards heaven, and his whole figure shrunk firmly together by the intense malignity with which he was about to hiss out his venomous imprecations against the defaulter, he presented at least one instance in which the low sordid vice of avarice rose to something like wild grandeur, if not sublimity.

Having remained in this posture for some time, he clasped his withered hands together, and wrung them until the bones cracked; then rising up and striking his stick bitterly on the earth—

"I can't," he exclaimed, "I can't get out the curses against him; but my heart's full of them—they're in it—they're in it—it's black an' hot wid them; I feel them here—here—*movin' as if they wor alive*, an' they'll be out."

Such was the strength and impetuosity of his hatred, and such his eagerness to discharge the whole quiver of his maledictions against the great public delinquent, that, as often happens in cases of overwhelming agitation, his faculties were paralyzed by the storm of passion which raged within him.

He rose to his feet, and left the group, muttering his wordless malignity as he went along, and occasionally pausing to look back with the fiery glare of a hyena at the house in which the robbery of his soul's treasure had been planned and accomplished.

It is unnecessary to say that the arrangements entered into with O'Halloran by John O'Brien, were promptly and ably carried into effect. A rapid ride soon brought the man of briefs and depositions to the prison where unhappy Connor lay. This young man's story, though simple, was improbable, and his version of the burning such as induced O'Halloran, who knew little of impressions and feelings in the absence of facts, to believe that no other head than his concocted the crime. Still, from the manly sincerity with which

his young client spoke, he felt inclined to impute the act rather to a freak of boyish malice and disappointment, than to a spirit of vindictive rancour. He entertained no expectation whatsoever, of Connor's acquittal, and hinted to him that it was his habit in such cases to recommend his clients to be prepared for the worst, without at the same time altogether abolishing hope. There was, indeed, nothing to break the chain of circumstantial evidence in which Flanagan had entangled him; he had been at the haggard shortly before the conflagration broke out: he had met Phil Curtis, and begged that man to conceal the fact of his having seen him, and he had not slept in his own bed either on that or the preceeding night. It was to no purpose, he affirmed that Flanagan himself had borrowed from him, and worn on the night in question, the shoes, whose prints were so strongly against him, or that the steel and tinder-box, which were found in his pocket, actually belonged to the accuser, who must have put them there without his knowledge. His case, in fact, was a bad one, and he felt that the interview with his attorney left him more seriously impressed with the danger of his situation, than he had been up till that period

"I suppose," said he, when the instructions were completed, "you have seen my father."

"Every thing is fully and liberally arranged," replied the other, with a reservation; "your father has been with me to-day; in fact I parted with him only a few minutes before I left home. So far let your mind be easy. The government prosecutes, which is something in your favour; and, now, good-bye to you; for my part, I neither advise you to hope or despair. If the worst comes to the worst, you must bear it like a man, and if we get an acquittal, it will prove the more agreeable for its not being expected."

The unfortunate youth felt, after O'Halloran's departure, the full force of that dark and fearful

presentiment which arises from the approach of the mightiest calamity that can befall an innocent man—a public and ignominious death, while in the very pride of youth, strength, and those natural hopes of happiness which existence had otherwise promised. In him this awful apprehension proceeded neither from the terror of judgment nor of hell, but from that dread of being withdrawn from life, and of passing down from the light, the enjoyments, and busy intercourse of a breathing and conscious world, into the silence and corruption of the unknown grave. When this ghastly picture was brought near him by the force of his imagination, he felt for a moment as if his heart had died away in him, and his blood became congealed into ice. Should this continue, he knew that human nature could not sustain it long, and he had already resolved to bear his fate with firmness, whatever that fate might be. He then reflected that he was innocent, and remembering the practice of his simple and less political forefathers, he knelt down and fervently besought the protection of that Being in whose hands are the issues of life and death.

On rising from this act of heartfelt devotion, he experienced that strength which he required so much. The fear of death ceased to alarm him, and his natural fortitude returned with more than its usual power to his support. In this state of mind he was pacing his narrow room, when the door opened, and his father, with a tottering step entered, and approached him. The son was startled, if not terrified at the change which so short a time had wrought in the old man's appearance.

“Good God, father dear,” he exclaimed, as the latter threw his arms with a tight and clinging grasp about him, “good heavens, what has happened to change you so much for the worse? why if you fret this way about me, you’ll soon break your heart: why will you fret, father, when you know I am *innocent*? Surely, at the worst, it is better to die innocent than live guilty?”

"Connor," said the old man, still clinging tenaciously to him, and looking wildly into his face; "Connor, it's broke—my heart's broke at last. Oh, Connor, won't you pity me, when you hear it—won't you, Connor—oh when you hear it, Connor, won't you pity me? It's gone, it's gone, it's gone—he's off, off—to that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man, and has robbed me and half the county; P—— has: I'm a ruined man, a beggar, an' will die a dog's death."

Connor looked down keenly into his father's face, and began to entertain a surmise so terrible that the beatings of his heart were in a moment audible to his own ear.

"Father," he inquired, "in the name of God what is wrong with you? what is it you speak of? Has P—— gone off with your money? Sit down, and don't look so terrified."

"He has, Connor—robbed me and half the county—he disappeared the evenin' of the very day I left my last lodgment wid him; he's in that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man, an' I'm ruined—ruined! Oh, God! Connor, how can I stand it? all my earnins an' my savins an' the fruits of my industry in *his* pocket, an' upon *his* back, an' upon *his* bones! My brain is reelin'—I dunna what I'm doin', nor what I'll do. To what hand now can I turn myself? who'll assist me? I dunna what I'm doin', nor scarcely what I'm sayin'. My head's all in confusion. Gone! gone! gone! Oh, see the luck that has come down upon me! Above all men, why was I singled out to be made a world's wondher of—why was *I*? What did I do? I robbed no one: yet it's gone—an' see the death that's afore me! oh God! oh God!"

"Well, father, let it go—you have still your health; you have still my poor mother to console you; and I hope you'll soon have myself too; between us we'll keep you comfortable, an' if you'll allow us to take our own way, more so than ever you did——."

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Fardorougha started, as if struck by some faint but sudden recollection. All at once he looked with amazement around the room, and afterwards with a pause of inquiry at his son. At length, a light of some forgotten memory appeared to flash at once across his brain; his countenance changed from the wild and unsettled expression which it bore, to one more stamped with the earnest humanity of our better nature.

"Oh, Connor," he at last exclaimed, putting his two hands into those of his son; "can you pity me, an' forgive me? You see, my poor boy, how I'm sufferin', an' you see that I can't—I won't—be able to bear up against this long."

The tears here ran down his worn and hollow cheeks.

"Oh," he proceeded, "how could I forget you, my darlin' boy? but I hardly think my head's right. If I had you with me, an' before my eyes, you'd keep my heart right, an' give me strength, which I stand sorely in need of. Saints in glory! how could I forget you, acushla, an' what now can I do for you? Not a penny have I to pay lawyer, or attorney, or any one, to defend you at your trial, and it so near!"

"Why, haven't you settled all that with Mr. O'Halloran, the attorney?"

"Not a bit, achora machree, not a bit; I was wid him this day, an' had agreed, but when I went to give him an ordher on P——, he—oh saints above, he *fwhistled* at me an' it—an tould me that P—— was gone to that nest o' robbers, the Isle of Man."

Connor turned his eyes, during a long pause, on the floor, and it was evident by his features that he laboured under some powerful and profound emotion. He rose up and took a sudden turn or two across the room, then resuming his seat, he wiped away a few bitter tears that no firmness on his part could repress.

"Noble girl—my darling, darling life, I see it all," he exclaimed. "Father, I never felt how bitter an'

dark my fate is till *now*; death, death would be little to me, only for her, but to leave her,—to leave *her*—.” He suddenly buried his face in his hands; but, by an instant effort once more rose up and added—“Well I’ll die worthy of her, if I can’t live so. Like a man I’ll die, if it must be—she knows I’m innocent, father; an’ when others, when the world will be talking of me as a villain, there will be, out of my own family at all events, one heart and one tongue, that will defend my unhappy name. If I am to come to a shameful death, I’ll care little about what the world may think, but that *she* knows me to be innocent, will make me die proudly—proudly.”

While he thus spoke and thought, the father’s eyes with a fixed gaze steadily followed his motions; the old man’s countenance altered; it first became pale as the ghastly visage of a skeleton, anon darkened with horror, which eventually shifted its hue into the workings of some passion or feeling that was new to him.

“Connor,” said he feebly, “I am unwell—unwell—come and sit down by me.”

“You are too much distressed every way, father,” said his son, taking his place upon the iron bedstead beside him.

“I am,” said Fardorougha calmly; “I am too much distressed—sit nearer me, Connor. I wish your mother was here; but she wasn’t able to come, she’s unwell too; a good mother she was, Connor, and a good wife.”

The son was struck, and somewhat alarmed by this sudden and extraordinary calmness of the old man.

“Father dear,” said he, “don’t be too much disheartened—all will be well yet, I hope—my trust in God is strong.”

“I hope all *will* be well,” replied the old man, “sit nearer me, an’, Connor, let me lay my head over upon your breast. I’m thinkin’ a great deal—don’t the world say, Connor, that I’m a bad man?”

"I don't care what the world says; no one in it ever durst say as much to *me*, father dear."

The old man looked up affectionately, but shook his head apparently in calm but rooted sorrow.

"Put your arms about me, Connor, and keep my head a little more up; I'm weak an' tired, an', someway, spakin's a throuble to me; let me think for a while."

"Do so, father," said the son, with deep compassion; "God knows but you're sufferings are enough to wear you out."

"They are," said Fardorougha, "they are."

A silence of some minutes ensued, during which Connor perceived that the old man, overcome with care and misery, had actually fallen asleep with his head upon his bosom. The circumstance, though by no means extraordinary, affected him very much. On surveying the pallid face of his father, and the worn, thread-like veins that ran along his temples, and calling to mind the love of the old man for himself, which, even avarice, in its deadliest power, failed to utterly overcome, he felt all the springs of his affection loosened, and his soul vibrated with tenderness towards him, such as no situation in their past lives had ever before created.

"If my fate chances to be an untimely one, father dear," he slowly murmured, "we'll soon meet in a better place, for I know you will not long live after me."

He then thought with bitterness of his mother and Una, and wondered at the mystery of the trial to which he was exposed.

The old man's slumber, however, was not dreamless, nor so refreshing as the exhaustion of a frame shattered by the havoc of contending principles required. On the contrary, it was disturbed by heavy groans, quick startings, and those twitchings of the limbs which betoken a restless mood of mind, and a nervous system highly excited. In the course of half an hour, the

symptoms of his inward emotion became more apparent; from being as at first merely physical, they assumed a mental character, and passed from ejaculations and single words, to short sentences, and ultimately to those of considerable length.

"Gone," he exclaimed, "gone; oh God! my curse—starved—dog—wid my tongue out!"

This dread of starvation, which haunted him through life, appeared in his dream still to follow him like a demon.

"I'm dyin'," he said, "I'm dyin' wid hunger—will no one give me a morsel? I was robbed an' have no money—don't you see me starvin'? I'm cuttin' wid hunger—five days widout mate—bring me mate, for God's sake—mate, mate, mate!—I'm gaspin'—my tongue's out; look at me, like a dog, behind this ditch, an' my tongue out!"

The son at this period would have awoke him, but he became more composed for a time, and enjoyed apparently a refreshing sleep. Still, it soon was evident that he dreamt, and as clear that "a change had come o'er the spirit of his dream."

"Who'll prevent me!" he exclaimed, "isn't he my son, our only child? Let me alone—I must, I must—what's my life, take it, an' let *him* live."

The tears started to Connor's eyes, and he pressed his father to his heart.

"Don't hould me," he proceeded; "oh God, here, I'll give all I'm worth, an' save him! Oh let me, thin—let me but kiss him once before he dies; it was I, it was myself that murdered him—all might 'a been well; ay, it was I that murdered you, Connor, my brave boy, an' have I you in my arms! Oh, *avick agus asthore machree*, it was I that murdered you, by my——, but they're takin' him—they're tearin' him away to——."

He started, and awoke, but so terrific had been his dream, that on opening his eyes he clasped Connor in his arms, and exclaimed—

"No, no, I'll hould him till you cut my grip—Connor avick, avick machree, hould to me!"

"Father, father, for God's sake, think a minute, you wor only dreamin'."

"Eh—what—where am I? Oh, Connor darlin' if you knew the dhrames I had—I thought you wor on the scaffle; but thanks be to the Saver, it *was* only a dhrame."

"Nothing more, father—nothing more; but for God's sake, keep your mind asy. Trust in God, father; every thing's in *his* hands; if it's his will to make us suffer, we ought to submit; and if it's not his will, he surely can bring us out of all our troubles. That's the greatest comfort I have."

Fardoroughia once more became calm, but still there was on his countenance, which was mournful and full of something else than simple sorrow, some deeply fixed determination, such as it was difficult to develope.

"Connor, achora," said he, "I must lave you, for there's little time to be lost. What attorney would you wish me to employ? I'll go home an' sell oats an' a cow or two. I've done you harm enough—more than you know—but now I'll spare no cost to get you out of this business. Connor, the tears that I saw a while agone run down your cheeks cut me to the heart."

The son informed him that a friend had taken proper measures for his defence, and that any further interference on his part would create confusion and delay. He also entreated his father to make no allusion whatsoever to *this* circumstance, and added, "that he himself actually knew not the name of the friend in question, but that as the matter stood, he considered even a surmise to be a breach of confidence that might be indelicate and offensive. After the trial, you can and ought to pay the expenses, and not to be under an obligation to any of so solemn a kind as that." He then sent his affectionate love and duty to his mother, at whose name his eyes were again filled with tears, and

begged the old man to comfort and support her with the utmost care and tenderness. As she was unwell, he requested him to dissuade her against visiting him till after the trial, least an interview might increase her illness, and render her less capable of bearing up under an unfavourable sentence, should such be the issue of the prosecution. Having then bade farewell to, and embraced the old man, the latter departed with more calmness and fortitude than he had up to that period displayed.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Time approaches the miserable with calamity in his train, his pinion is swifter than that of the eagle; but, alas! when carrying them towards happiness, his pace is slower than that of the tortoise. The only three persons on earth whose happiness was involved in that of Donovan, found themselves, on the eve of the assizes, overshadowed by a dreariness of heart, that was strong in proportion to the love they bore him. The dead calm which had fallen on Fardorougha was absolutely more painful to his wife, than would have been the paroxysms that resulted from his lust of wealth. Since his last interview with Connor, he never once alluded to the loss of his money, unless abruptly in his dreams, but there was stamped upon his whole manner a gloomy and mysterious composure, which, of itself, wofully sank her spirits, independently of the fate which impended over their son. The change visible on both, and the breaking down of their strength, were indeed pitiable.

As for Una, it would be difficult to describe her struggle between confidence in his innocence and apprehension of the law, which she knew had often punished the guiltless instead of the criminal. 'Tis true, she attempted to assume, in the eyes of others, a fortitude which belied her fears, and even affected to smile at the possibility of her lover's honour and character suffering any tarnish from the ordeal to which they were about to be submitted. Her smile, however, on such occasions, was a melancholy one, and the secret tears she shed might prove, as they did to her brother, who was alone privy to her grief, the extent of those terrors which, notwithstanding her disavowal of them, wrung her soul so bitterly. Day after day her spirits became more and more depressed, till, as the crisis of

Connor's fate arrived, the roses had altogether flown from her cheeks.

Indeed, now that the trial was at hand, public sympathy turned rapidly and strongly in his favour. His father had lost that wealth, the acquisition of which earned him so heavy a portion of infamy; and as he had been sufficiently punished in *his own person*, they did not think it just to transfer any portion of the resentment borne against him to a son who had never participated in his system of oppression. They felt for Connor now on his own account, and remembered only his amiable and excellent character. In addition to this, the history of the mutual attachment between him and Una having become the topic of general conversation, the rash act for which he stood committed was good-humouredly resolved into a foolish freak of love, for which it would be a thousand murders to take away his life. In such mood was the public, and the parties most interested in the event of our story, when the morning dawned of that awful day which was to restore Connor O'Donovan to the hearts that loved him so well, or to doom him, a convicted felon, to a shameful and ignominious death.

At length the trial came on, and our unhappy prisoner, at the hour of eleven o'clock, was placed at the bar of his country to stand the brunt of a government prosecution. Common report had already carried abroad the story of Una's love and his, many interesting accounts of which had got into the papers of the day. When he stood forward, therefore, all eyes were eagerly rivetted upon him; the judge glanced at him with calm dispassionate scrutiny, and the members of the bar, especially the juniors, turning round, surveyed him through their glasses with a gaze in which might be read something more than that hard indifference which familiarity with human crime and affliction ultimately produces even in dispositions the most humane and amiable. No sooner had the curiosity of the multitude

been gratified, than a murmur of pity, blended slightly with surprise and approbation, ran lowly through the court-house. The judge again surveyed him with a countenance in which were depicted admiration and regret. The counsel also chatted to each other in a low tone, occasionally turning round and marking his deportment and appearance with increasing interest.

Seldom, probably never, had a more striking, perhaps a more noble figure, stood at the bar of that court. His locks were rich and brown ; his forehead expansive, and his manly features remarkable for their symmetry ; his teeth were regular and white, and his dark eye full of a youthful lustre which no dread of calamity could repress. Neither was his figure, which was of the tallest, inferior in a single point to so fine a countenance. As he stood, at his full height of six feet, it was impossible not to feel deeply influenced in his favour, especially after having witnessed the mournful but dignified composure of his manner, equally remote from indifference or dejection. He appeared, indeed, to view in its proper light the danger of the position in which he stood, but he viewed it with the calm unshrinking energy of a brave man who is always prepared for the worst. Indeed there might be observed upon his broad open brow a loftiness of bearing such as is not unfrequently produced by a consciousness of innocence, and the natural elevation of mind which results from a sense of danger ; to which we may add that inward scorn which is ever felt for baseness, by those who are degraded to the necessity of defending themselves against the villany of the malignant and prefligate.

When called upon to plead to the indictment, he uttered the words "not guilty" in a full, firm, and mellow voice that drew the eyes of the spectators once more upon him, and occasioned another slight hum of sympathy and admiration. No change of colour was observable on his countenance, nor any other

expression, save the lofty composure to which we have just alluded.

The trial at length proceeded, and after a long and able statement from the attorney-general, Bartle Flanagan was called upon the table. The prisoner, whose motions were keenly observed, betrayed, on seeing him, neither embarrassment nor agitation; all that could be perceived, was a more earnest and intense light in his eyes, as they settled upon his accuser. Flanagan detailed, with singular minuteness and accuracy, the whole progress of the crime from its first conception to its perpetration. Indeed, had he himself been in the dock, and his evidence against Connor a confession of his own guilt, it would, with some exceptions, have been literally true. He was ably cross-examined, but no tact or experience, or talent, on the part of the prisoner's counsel, could in any important degree shake his testimony. The ingenuity with which he laid and conducted the plot was astonishing, as was his foresight, and the precaution he adopted against detection. O'Halloran, Connor's attorney, had ferreted out the very man from whom he purchased the tinder-box, with a hope of proving that it was not the prisoner's property but his own; yet this person, who remembered the transaction very well, assured him that Flanagan said he procured it by the desire of Fardorougha Donovan's son.

During his whole evidence, he never once raised his eyes ~~as~~ look upon the prisoner's face, until he was desired to identify him. He then turned round, and standing with the rod in his hand, looked for some moments upon his victim. His dark brows got black as night, whilst his cheeks were blanched to the hue of ashes—the white smile as before sat upon his lips, and his eyes, in which there blazed the unsteady fire of a treacherous and cowardly heart, sparkled with the red turbid glare of triumph and vengeance. He laid the rod upon Connor's head, and they gazed at each other, face

to face, exhibiting as striking a contrast as could be witnessed. The latter stood erect and unshaken—his eye calmly bent upon that of his foe, but with a spirit in it that seemed to *him* alone by whom it was understood, to strike dismay into the very soul of falsehood within him. The villain's eyes could not stand the glance of Connor's—they fell and his whole countenance assumed such a blank and guilty stamp, that an old experienced barrister who watched them both, could not avoid saying, that if he had his will they should exchange situations.

“I would not hang a dog,” he whispered, “on that fellow's evidence—he has guilt in his face.”

When asked why he ran away on meeting Phil Curtis, near O'Brien's house, on their return that night, while Connor held his ground, he replied that it was very natural he should run away, and not wish to be seen after having assisted at such a crime. In reply to another question, he said it was as natural that Connor should have run away also, and that he could not account for it, except by the fact that God always occasions the guilty to commit some oversight, by which they may be brought to punishment. These replies, apparently so rational and satisfactory, convinced Connor's counsel that his case was hopeless, and that no skill or ingenuity on their part could succeed in breaking down Flanagan's evidence.

The next witness called was Phil Curtis, whose testimony corroborated Bartle's in every particular, and gave to the whole trial a character of gloom and despair. The constables who applied his shoes to the foot-marks were then produced, and swore in the clearest manner as to their corresponding. They then deposed to finding the tinder-box in his pocket, according to the information received from Flanagan, every title of which they found to be remarkably correct.

There was only one other witness now necessary to complete the chain against him, and he was only produced because Biddy Nulty, the servant-maid, posi-

tively stated, and actually swore, when previously examined, that she was ignorant whether Connor slept in his father's house on the night in question or not. There was no alternative, therefore, but to produce the father: and Fardorougha Donovan was consequently forced to become an evidence against his own son.

The old man's appearance upon the table excited deep commiseration for both, and the more so when the spectators contemplated the rooted sorrow which lay upon the wild and wasted features of the woe-worn father. Still the old man was composed and calm; but his calmness was in an extraordinary degree mournful and touching. When he sat down after having been sworn, and feebly wiped the dew from his thin temples, many eyes were already filled with tears. When the question was put to him if he remembered the night laid in the indictment, he replied, that he did.

"Did the prisoner at the bar sleep at home on that night?"

The old man looked into the face of the counsel with such an eye of deprecating entreaty, as shook the voice in which the question was repeated. He then turned about, and taking a long gaze at his son, rose up, and extending his hands to the judge, exclaimed:

"My lord, my lord, he is my only son—my only child!"

These words were followed by a pause in the business of the court, and a dead silence of more than a minute.

"If justice," said the judge, "could on any occasion waive her claim to a subordinate link in the testimony she requires, it would certainly be in a case so painful and affecting as this. Still we cannot permit personal feeling, however amiable, or domestic attachment, however strong, to impede her progress when redressing public wrong. Although the duty be painful, and we admit that such a duty is one of unexampled agony, yet it must be complied with, and you consequently

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will answer the question which the counsel has put to you. The interests of society require such sacrifices, and they must be made."

The old man kept his eyes fixed on the judge while he spoke, but when he had ceased, he again fixed them on his son.

"My lord," he exclaimed again, with clasped hands—"I can't—I can't."

"There is nothing criminal, or improper, or sinful in it," replied the judge; "on the contrary, it is your duty both as a Christian and a man. Remember you have this moment sworn to tell the truth, and the whole truth; you consequently must keep your oath."

"What you say, sir, may be right, an' of coorse is; but oh, my lord, I'm not able; *I can't get out the words to hang my only boy*. If I sed any thing to hurt him, my heart 'ud break before your eyes. Maybe you don't know the love of a father for an only son?"

"Perhaps, my lords," observed the attorney-general, "it would be desirable to send for a clergyman of his own religion who might succeed in prevailing on him to——"

"No," interrupted Fardoroughia, "my mind's made up—a word against him will never come from my lips; not for priest or friar. I'd die widout the Saykermert sooner."

"This is trifling with the court," said the judge, assuming an air of severity, which, however, he did not feel. "We shall be forced to commit you to prison unless you give evidence."

"My lord," said Fardoroughia, meekly but firmly, "I am willin' to go to prison. I am willin' to die wid him, if he is to die—but I neither can nor will open my lips against him. If I thought him guilty I might, but I know he is innocent—my heart knows it—an' am I to back the villain that's strivin' to swear away his life? No, Connor avourneen, whatever they do to you, your father will have no hand in it."

The court, in fact, were perplexed in the extreme. The old man was not only firm, from motives of strong attachment, but intractable from a habitual narrowness of thought which prevented him from taking that comprehensive view of justice and judicial authority, which might overcome the repugnance of men less obstinate from ignorance of legal usages.

"I ask you for the last time," said the judge, "will you give your evidence? because if you refuse, the court will feel bound to send you to prison."

"God bless you, my lord; that's a relief to my heart—any thing, any thing, but to say a word against a boy that, since the day he was born, never vexed either his mother or myself. If he gets over this, I have much to make up to him; for indeed I wasn't the father to him that I ought. Avick machree, now I feel it, maybe whin it's too late."

These words affected all who heard them, many even to tears.

"I have no remedy," observed the judge. "Tipstaff, take away the witness to prison. It is painful to me," he added, in a broken voice, "to feel compelled thus to punish you for an act which, however I may respect the motives that dictate it, I cannot overlook. The ends of justice cannot be frustrated."

"My lord," exclaimed the prisoner, "don't punish the old man for refusing to speak against me. His love for me is so strong, that I know he couldn't do it. I will state the truth myself, but spare him. I did *not* sleep in my own bed on the night Mr. O'Brien's haggard was burned, nor on the night before it. I slept in my father's barn with Flanagan, both times at his own request; but I did not then suspect his design in asking me."

"This admission, though creditable to your affection and filial duty, was indiscreet," observed the judge. "Whatever you think might be serviceable, suggest to your attorney, who can communicate it to your counsel."

"My lord," said Connor, "I could not see my father punished for loving me as he does; an' besides I have no wish to conceal any thing. If the whole truth could be known, I would stand but a short time where I am, nor would Flanagan be long out of it."

There is an earnest and impressive tone in truth, especially when spoken under circumstances of great difficulty, where it is rather disadvantageous to him who utters it, that in many instances produces conviction by an inherent candour which all feel without any process of reasoning or argument. There was in those few words a warmth of affection towards his father, and a manly simplicity of heart, each of which was duly appreciated by the assembly about him, who felt, without knowing why, the indignant scorn of falsehood that so emphatically pervaded his expressions. It was indeed impossible to hear them, and look upon his noble countenance and figure without forgetting the humbleness of his rank in life, and feeling for him a marked deference and respect.

The trial then proceeded, but, alas, notwithstanding a variety of evidence borne on oath by many persons of respectability and honour, in favour of his previous excellent character, yet, it was quite clear that the jury had only one course to pursue, and that was to bring in a conviction. After a lapse of about ten minutes, they returned to the jury-box, and as the foreman handed down their verdict, a feather might be heard falling in the court, the faces of the spectators got pale, and the hearts of strong men beat as if the verdict about to be announced were to fall upon themselves, and not upon the prisoner. It is at all times an awful and trying ceremony to witness, but on this occasion it was a much more affecting one than had occurred in the court for many years. As the foreman handed down the verdict, Connor's eye followed the paper with the same calm resolution which he displayed during the trial. On himself there was no change visible, unless

the appearance of two round spots, one on each cheek, of a somewhat deeper red than the rest.

At length, in the midst of the dead silence, pronounced in a voice that reached to the remotest extremity of the court, was heard the fatal sentence—"Guilty;" and afterwards in a less distinct manner, "with our strongest and most earnest recommendation for mercy, in consequence of his youth and previous good character." The wail and loud sobbings of the female part of the crowd, and the stronger but more silent grief of the men, could not for many minutes be repressed by any efforts of the court or its officers.

In the midst of this, a little to the left of the dock, was an old man, whom those around him were conveying in a state of insensibility out of the court, and it was obvious that from motives of humane consideration for the prisoner, they endeavoured to prevent him from ascertaining that it was his father. In this, however, they failed; the son's eye caught a glimpse of his grey locks, and it was observed that his cheek for the first time indicated, by a momentary change, that the only evidence of agitation he betrayed was occasioned by sympathy in the old man's sorrows, rather than by the contemplation of his own fate.

The tragic spirit of the day, however, was still to deepen, and a more stunning blow, though less acute in its agony, was to fall upon the prisoner. The stir of the calm and solemn jurors, as they issued out of their room—the hushed breaths of the spectators—the deadly silence that prevails—and the appalling announcement of the word "Guilty"—are circumstances that test human fortitude, more even than the passing of the fearful sentence itself. In the latter case hope is banished, and the worst that can happen known; the mind is, therefore, thrown back upon its last energies, which give it strength in the same way in which the death-struggle frequently arouses the muscular action of the body—an unconscious power of resistance that forces

the culprit's heart to take refuge in the first and strongest instincts of its nature, the undying principle of self-preservation. No sooner was the verdict returned, and silence obtained, than the judge, now deeply affected, put on the black cap, at which a low wild murmur of stifled grief and pity ran through the court-house; but no sooner was his eye bent on the prisoner, than their anxiety to hear the sentence hushed them once more into the stillness of the grave. The prisoner looked upon him with an open but melancholy gaze, which from the candid and manly character of his countenance, was touching in the extreme.

"Connor O'Donovan," said the judge, "have you any thing to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon you?"

"My lord," he replied, "I can say nothing to prevent it. I am prepared for it. I know I must bear it, and I hope I will bear it as a man ought that feels his heart free from even a thought of the crime he is to die for. I have nothing more to say."

"You have this day been found guilty," proceeded the judge, "and, in the opinion of the court, upon clear and satisfactory evidence, of a crime marked by a character of revenge, which, I am bound to say, must have proceeded from a very malignant spirit. It was a wanton act, for the perpetration of which your motives were so inadequate, that one must feel at a loss to ascertain the exact principle on which you committed it. It was also not only a wicked act, but one so mean, that a young man bearing the character of spirit and generosity which you have hitherto borne, as appears from the testimony of those respectable persons who this day have spoken in your favour, ought to have scorned to contemplate it even for a moment. Had the passion you entertained for the daughter of the man you so basely injured, possessed one atom of the dignity, disinterestedness, or purity of true affection, you never could have stooped to any act offensive to the object of

your love, or to those even in the remotest degree related to her. The example, consequently, which you have held out to society is equally vile and dangerous. You punished the father by a dastardly and unmanly act, for guarding the future peace and welfare of a child so young and so dear to him. What would become of society if this exercise of a parent's right on behalf of a daughter were to be visited upon him as a crime, by every vindictive and disappointed man, whose affection for her he might, upon proper grounds, decline to sanction? Yet it is singular, and, I confess, almost inexplicable to me at least, why you should have rushed into the commission of such an act. The brief period of your existence has been stained by no other crime. On the contrary, you have maintained a character far above your situation in life—a character equally remarkable for gentleness, spirit, truth, and affection—and I must confess, that on no other occasion of my judicial life have I ever felt my judgment and my feelings so much at variance. I cannot doubt your guilt, but I shed those tears that it ever existed, and that a youth of so much promise should be cut down prematurely by the strong arm of necessary justice, leaving his bereaved parents bowed down with despair that can never be comforted. Had they another son, or another child to whom their affections could turn——”

Here the judge felt it necessary to pause, in consequence of his emotion. Strong feeling had, indeed, spread through the whole court, in which, while he ceased, could be heard low moanings, and other symptoms of acute sorrow.

“It is now your duty to forget every earthly object on which your heart may have been fixed, and to seek that source of consolation and mercy which can best sustain and comfort you. Go with a penitent heart to the throne of your Redeemer, who, if your repentance be sincere, will in no wise cast you out. The recommendation of the jury to the mercy of the crown, in

consideration of your youth and previous good conduct, will not be overlooked ; but in the mean time the court is bound to pronounce upon you the sentence of the law, which is, that you be taken from the prison from which you came, on the 8th of next month, at the hour of twelve o'clock in the forenoon, to the front drop of the jail, and there hanged by the neck until you be dead, and may God have mercy on your soul !”

“My lord,” said the prisoner, unmoved in voice or manner, unless it might be that both expressed more decision and energy than he had shown during any other part of the trial ; “my lord, I am now a condemned man, but if I stood with the rope about my neck, ready to die, I would not exchange situations with the person that has been my accuser. My lord, I can forgive him, and I ought, for I know he has yet to die, and must meet his God. As for myself, I am thankful that I have not such a conscience as his to bring afore my Great Judge ; *and for this reason I am not afraid to die.*”

He was then removed amidst a murmur of grief, as deep and sincere as was ever expressed for a human being under circumstances of a similar character. After having entered the prison, he was about to turn along a passage which led to the apartment hitherto allocated to him.

“This way,” said the turnkey, “this way ; God knows I would be glad to let you stop in the room you had, but I haven’t the power. We must put you into one of the condemned cells ; but by—it ’ill go hard if I don’t stretch a little to make you as comfortable as possible.”

“Take no trouble,” said Connor, “take no trouble, I care now little about my own comfort ; but if you wish to oblige me, bring me my father. Oh, my mother, my mother !—you, I doubt, are struck down already !”

“She was too ill to attend the trial to-day,” replied the turnkey.

“I know it,” said Connor ; “but as she’s not here,

bring me my father. Send out a messenger for him, and be quick, for I won't rest till I see him; he wants comfort; the old man's heart will break."

"I heard them say," replied the turnkey, after they had entered the cell allotted to him, "that he was in a faint in Mat Corrigan's public-house, but that he had recovered. I'll go myself and bring him to you."

"Do," said Connor, "an' leave us the moment you bring him."

It was more than an hour before the man returned, holding Fardorougha by the arm, and after having left him in the cell, he instantly locked it outside, and withdrew, as he had been desired. Connor ran to support his tottering steps; and wofully indeed did that unfortunate parent stand in need of his assistance. In the picture presented by Fardorougha the unhappy young man forgot in a moment his own miserable and gloomy fate. There blazed in his father's eyes an excitement at once dead and wild, a vague fire without character, yet stirred by an incomprehensible energy wholly beyond the usual manifestations of thought or suffering. The son, on beholding him, shuddered, and not for the first time, for he had on one or two occasions before become apprehensive that his father's mind might, if strongly pressed, be worn down by the singular conflict of which it was the scene, to that most frightful of all maladies, insanity. As the old man, however, folded him in his feeble arms, and attempted to express what he felt, the unhappy boy groaned aloud, and felt even in the depth of his cell, a blush of momentary shame suffuse his cheek and brow. His father, notwithstanding the sentence that had been so shortly before passed upon his son—that father he perceived to be absolutely intoxicated, or to use a more appropriate expression, decidedly drunk.

There was less blame, however, to be attached to Fardorougha on this occasion, than Connor imagined. When the old man swooned in the court-house, he

was taken by his neighbours to a public house, where he lay for some minutes in a state of insensibility. On his recovery he was plied with burnt whiskey, as well to restore his strength and prevent a relapse, as upon the principle that it would enable him to sustain with more firmness the dreadful and shocking destiny which awaited his son. Actuated by motives of mistaken kindness, they poured between three and four glasses of this fiery cordial down his throat, which, as he had not taken so much during the lapse of thirty years before, soon reduced the feeble old man to the condition in which we have described him when entering the gloomy cell of the prison.

"Father," said Connor, "in the name of heaven, who or what has put you into this dreadful state, especially when we consider the hard, hard fate that is over us, and upon us?"

"Connor," returned Fardorougha, not perceiving the drift of his question, "Connor, my son, I'll hang—hang him, that's one comfort."

"Who are you speaking about?"

"The villain sentence was passed on to—to-day. He'll swing—swing for the robbery; P——e will. We got him back out of that nest of robbers, the Isle o' Man—o' Man they call it—that he made off to, the villain!"

"Father dear, I'm sorry to see you in this state on sich a day—sich a black day to us. For *your* sake I am. What will the world say of it?"

"Connor, I'm in great spirits all out, exceptin' for something that I forget, that—that—li—lies heavy upon me. That I mayn't sin, but I am—I am, indeed—for now that we've cotch him, we'll hang the villain up. Ha, ha, ha, it's a pleasant sight to see sich a fellow danglin' from a rope! Throth it's a good law that hangin'!"

"Father, sit down here, sit down upon this bad and comfortless bed, and keep yourself quiet for a little. Maybe you'll be better soon. Oh, why did you drink, and us in such trouble?"

"I'll not sit down; I'm very well able to stand," said he, tottering across the room. "The villain thought to starve me, Connor, but you heard the sentence that was passed on him to-day. Where's Honor, from me? she'll be glad whin—whin she hears it, and my son, Connor, will too—but he's—he's—where is Connor?—bring me, bring me to Connor. Ah, avourneen, Honor's heart's breaking for him—'tany rate, the mother's heart—the mother's heart—she's laid low wid an achin' sorrowful head for her boy."

"Father, for God's sake, will you try and rest a little. If you could sleep, father dear, if you could sleep."

"I'll hang P——e—I'll hang him—but if he gives back my money, I'll not touch him. Who are you?"

"Father dear, I'm Connor, your own son Connor."

"I'll marry you and Una, then. I'll settle all the villain robbed me of on you, and you'll have every penny of it—*afther my death*. Don't be keepin' me up, I can walk very well; ay, an' I'm in right good spirits. Sure the money's got, Connor—got back every skilyeen of it. Ha, ha, ha, God be praised! God be praised! We've a right to be thankful—the world isn't so bad afther all."

"Father, will you try and rest?"

"It's not so bad, afther all—I won't starve, as I thought I would, now that the *arrighad* is got back from the villain. Ha, ha, ha, it's great—it's great. Connor, ahagur?"

"What is it, father dear?"

"Connor, sing me a song—my heart's up—it's light—ar'nt you glad?—sing me a song."

"If you'll sleep first, father."

"The *Uligone*, Connor, or *Shuil agra*, or the *Trougha*—for, avourneen, avourneen, there must be sorrow in it, for my heart's low, and your mother's heart's in sorrow, an' she's lyin' far from us, an' her boy's not near her, an' her heart's sore, sore, an' her head achin', bekase her boy's far from her, an' she can't come to him!"

The boy, whose noble fortitude was unshaken during the formidable trial it had encountered in the course of that day, now felt overcome by this simple allusion to his mother's love. He threw his arms about his father's neck, and placing his head upon his bosom, wept aloud for many, many minutes.

"Hushth, Connor, hushth, asthore—what makes *you* cry? Sure all will be right now that we've got back the money. Eh? Ha, ha, ha, it's great luck, Connor, isn't it great? An' you'll have it, you an' Una,—*after my death*—for I won't starve for e'er a one o' yez."

"Father, father, I wish you would rest."

"Well, well, avick, I will—bring me to bed—you'll sleep in your own bed to-night. Your poor mother's head hasn't been off o' the place where your's lay, Connor. No, indeed; her heart's low—it's breakin', breakin',—but she won't let any body make your bed but herself. Oh, the mother's love, Connor!—that mother's love—that mother's love—but, Connor——"

"Well, father dear?"

"Isn't there something wrong, avick? isn't there something not right, somehow?"

This question occasioned the son to feel as if his heart would literally burst to pieces, especially when he considered the circumstances under which the old man put it. Indeed there was something so transcendently appalling in his intoxication, and in the wild but affecting tone of his conversation, that when joined to his pallid and spectral appearance, it gave a character, for the time being, of a mood that struck the heart with an image more frightful than that of madness itself.

"Wrong, father!" he replied, "all's wrong, and I can't understand it. It's well for you that you don't know the doom that's upon us now, for I feel how it would bring you down, and how it will, too. It will kill you, my father—it will kill you."

"Connor, come home, avick, come home—I'm tired at any rate—come home to your mother—come, for her

sake—I know I'm not at home, an' she'll not rest till I bring you safe back to her. Come now, I'll have no put offs—you must come, I say.—I ordher you—I can't and won't meet her widout you. Come, avick, an' you can sing me the song goin' home—come wid your own poor ould father, that can't live widout you—come, a *sullish machree*, I don't feel right here—we won't be properly happy, till we go to your lovin' mother."

"Father, father, you don't know what you're making me suffer. What heart, blessed heaven, can bear —— "

The door of his cell here opened, and the turnkey stated that some five or six of his friends were anxious to see him, and above all things, to take charge of his father to his home. This was a manifest relief to the young man, who felt more deeply upon his unhappy father's account than his own.

"Some foolish friends," said he, "have given my father liquor, an' it has got into his head—indeed it overcame him the more, as I never remember him to taste a drop of spirits during his life before. I can see nobody now, an' him in this state; but if they wish me well, let them take care of him, and lave him safe at his own house, and tell them I'll be glad if I can see them to-morrow, or any other time."

With considerable difficulty Fardorougha was removed from Connor, whom he clung to with all his strength, attempting also to drag him away. He then wept bitterly, because he declined to accompany him home, that he might comfort his mother, and enjoy the imagined recovery of his money from P——e, and the conviction which he believed they had just succeeded in getting against that notorious defaulter.

CHAPTER XI.

AFTER they had departed, Connor sat down upon his hard pallet, and, supporting his head with his hand, saw, for the first time, in all its magnitude and horror, the death to which he found himself doomed. The excitement occasioned by his trial, and his increasing firmness, as that sad event darkened on through all its stages to the final sentence, had now in a considerable degree abandoned him, and left his heart, at present more accessible to natural weakness than it had been, to the power of his own affections. The image of his early-loved Una had seldom since his arrest been out of his imagination. Her youth, her beauty, her wild but natural grace, and the flashing glances of her dark enthusiastic eye, when joined to her tenderness and boundless affection for himself—all caused his heart to quiver with deadly anguish through every fibre. This produced a transition to Flanagan—the contemplation of whose perfidious vengeance made him spring from his seat in a paroxysm of indignant but intense hatred, so utterly furious that the swelling tempest which it sent through his veins caused him to reel with absolute giddiness.

“Great God!” he exclaimed, “you are just, and will this be suffered?”

He then thought of his parents, and the fiery mood of his mind changed to one of melancholy and sorrow. He looked back upon his aged father’s enduring struggle—upon the battle of the old man’s heart against the accursed vice which had swayed its impulses so long—on the protracted conflict between the two energies, which, like contending armies in the field, had now left little but ruin and desolation behind them. His heart, when he brought all these things near him,

expanded, and, like a bird, folded its wings about the grey-haired martyr, for such indeed he was to the love he bore him. But his mother—the caressing, the proud, the affectionate—whose heart, in the vivid tenderness of hope for her beloved boy, had shaped out his path in life, as that on which she could brood with the fondness of a loving and delighted spirit—that mother's image, and the idea of her sorrows prostrated his whole strength, like that of a stricken infant, to the earth.

“Mother, mother,” he exclaimed, “when I think of what you reared me for, and what I am this night, how can my heart do otherwise than break, as well on your account as my own, and for all that love us! Oh! what will become of you my blessed mother! Hard does it go with you that you're not about “*your pride*,” as you used to call me, now that I'm in this trouble, in this fate that is soon to cut me down from your loving arms! The thought of you is dear to my heart,—dear, dearer, dearer than that of any—than my own Una. What will become of *her*, too, and the old man? Oh, why, why is it that the death I am to suffer is to fall so heavily on them that love me best?”

He then returned to his bed, but the cold and dreary images of death and ruin haunted his imagination, until the night was far spent, when at length he fell into a deep and dreamless sleep.

By the sympathy expressed at his trial, our readers may easily conceive the profound sorrow which was felt for him, in the district where he was known, from the moment the knowledge of his sentence had gone abroad among the people. This was much strengthened by that which, whether in man or woman, never fails to create an amiable prejudice in its favour—I mean youth and personal beauty. His whole previous character was now canvassed with a mournful lenity that brought out his virtues into beautiful relief; and the fate of the affectionate son was deplored no less than that of the

youthful, but rash and inconsiderate lover. Neither was the father without his share of compassion, for they could not forget that, despite of all his penury and extortion, the old man's heart had been fixed with a strong but uncouth affection upon his amiable and only boy. It was, however, when they thought of his mother, in whose heart of hearts he had been enshrined as the idol of her whole affection, that their spirits became truly touched. Many a mother assumed in her own person, by the force of imagination, the sinking woman's misery, and poured forth, in unavailing tears, the undeniable proofs of the sincerity with which she participated in Honor's bereavement.

As for Flanagan, a deadly weight of odium, such as is peculiar to the *Informer* in Ireland, fell upon both him and his. Nor was this all. Aided by that sagacity which is so conspicuous in Irishmen, when a vindictive or hostile feeling is excited among them, they depicted Flanagan's character with an accuracy and truth astonishingly correct and intuitive. Numerous were the instances of cowardice, treachery, and revenge, remembered against him, by those who had been his close and early companions, not one of which would have ever occurred to them, were it not that their minds had been thrown back upon the scrutiny by the melancholy fate in which he had involved the unhappy Connor O'Donovan. Had he been a mere ordinary witness in the matter, he would have experienced little of this boiling indignation at their hands; but first to participate in the guilt, and afterwards, for the sake of the reward, or from a worse and more flagitious motive, to turn upon him, and become his accuser, even to the taking away of the young man's *life*—to *stag* against his companion and accomplice—this was looked upon as a crime ten thousand times more black and damnable than that for which the unhappy culprit had been consigned to so shameful a death.

But, alas, of what avail was all this sympathy and

indignation to the unfortunate youth himself, or to those most deeply interested in his fate? Would not the very love and sorrow felt towards her son fall upon his mother's heart with a heavier weight of bitterness and agony? Would not his Una's soul be wounded on that account with a sharper and more deadly pang of despair and misery. It would indeed, be difficult to say whether the house of Bodagh Buie or that of Fardorougha was then in the deeper sorrow.

On the morning of Connor's trial Una arose at an earlier hour than usual, and it was observed when she sat at breakfast, that her cheek was at one moment pale as death, and again flushed and feverish. These symptoms was first perceived by her affectionate brother, who, on witnessing the mistakes she made in pouring out the tea, exchanged a glance with his parents, and afterwards asked her to allow him to take her place. She laid down the tea-pot, and looking him mournfully in the face, attempted to smile at a request so unusual.

"Una dear," said he, "you must allow me.—There is no necessity for attempting to conceal what you feel—we all know it—and if we did not, the fact of your having filled the sugar-bowl instead of the tea-cup would soon discover it."

She said nothing, but looked at him again, as if she scarcely comprehended what he said. A glance, however, at the sugar-bowl convinced her that she was incapable of performing the usual duties of the breakfast-table. Hitherto she had not raised her eyes to her father's or mother's face, nor spoken to them, as had been her wont, when meeting at that strictly domestic meal. The unrestrained sobbings of the mother had aroused her for the first time, and on looking up, she saw her father wiping away the big tears from his eyes.

"Una, avourneen," said the worthy man, "let John make tay for us—for, God help you, you can't do it. Don't fret, achora machree, don't—don't, Una; as

God is over me, I'd give all I'm worth to save him for your sake."

She looked at her father, and smiled again; but that smile cut him to the heart.

"I will make tea myself, father," she replied, "and I *won't* commit any more mistakes."

"Avourneen," said the mother, "let John do it; acushla machree, let him do it."

She then rose, and without uttering a word, passively and silently placed herself on her brother's chair; he having at the same time, taken that on which she had sat.

"Una," said her father, taking her hand, "you must be a good girl, and you must have courage; and whatever happens, my darling, you'll pluck up strength, I hope, and bear it."

"I hope so, father," said she, "I hope so."

"But, avourneen machree," said her mother, "I would rather see you cryin' fifty time over, than smilin' the way you do."

"Mother," said she, "my heart is sore—my heart is sore."

"It is, ahagur machree; and your hand is tremblin' so much that you can't bring the tay-cup to your mouth; but, then, don't smile so sorrowfully, *anein machree*."

"Why should I cry, mother?" she replied; "I know that Connor is innocent. If I knew him to be guilty I would weep, and ought to weep."

"At all events, Una," said her father, "you know it's the government and not us that's prosecuting him."

To this Una made no reply, but, thrusting away her cup, she looked with the same mournful smile from one to another of the little circle about her. At length she spoke.

"Father, I have a request to ask of you."

"If it's within my power, Una darling, I'll grant it; and if it's not, it'll go hard with me but I'll

bring it within my power. What is it, *asthore machree*."

"In case *he's* found guilty, to let John put off his journey to Maynooth, and stay with *me* for some time—it won't be long I'll keep him."

"If it pleases you, darling, he'll never put his foot into Maynooth again."

"No," said the mother, "*dhamnho* to the step, if you don't wish him."

"Oh, no, no," said Una, "it's only for a while."

"Unless she desires it, I will *never* go," replied the loving brother; "nor will I ever leave you in sorrow, my beloved and only sister—never—never—so long as a word from my lips can give you consolation."

The warm tears coursed each other down his cheeks as he spoke, and both his parents, on looking at the almost blighted flower before them, wept as if the hand of death had already been upon her.

"You, father, and John, are going to his trial," she observed; "for me I like to be alone;—alone; but when you return to-night, let John break it to me. I'll now go to the garden. I'll walk about to-day—only before you go, John, I want to speak to you."

Calmy and without a tear, she then left the parlour, and proceeded to the garden where she began to dress and ornament the hive which contained the swarm that Connor had brought back to her on the day their mutual attachment was first disclosed to each other.

"Father," said John when she was gone, "I am afraid that Una's heart is broken, or if not broken, that she won't survive his conviction long—it's breaking fast—for my part, in her present state, I neither will nor can leave her."

The affectionate father made no reply, but putting his handkerchief to his eyes, wept, as did her mother, in silent but bitter grief.

"I cannot speak about it, nor think of it, John," said he, after some time, "but we must do what we can for her."

"If any thing happens her," said the mother, "I'd never get over it. Oh, merciful Saviour! how could we live widout her!"

"I would rather see her in tears," said John—"I would rather see her in outrageous grief a thousand times, than in the calm but ghastly resolution with which she is bearing herself up against the trial of this day. If he's condemned to death, I'm afraid that either her health or reason will sink under it, and, in that case, God pity her and us, for how, how, as you say, mother, could we afford to lose her? Still let us hope for the best. Father, it's time to prepare; get the car ready. I am going to the garden, to hear what the poor thing has to say to me, but I will be with you soon."

Her brother found her, as we have said, engaged calmly, and with a melancholy pleasure, in adorning the hive, which, on Connor's account, had become her favourite. He was not at all sorry that she had proposed this short interview, for as his hopes of Connor's acquittal were but feeble, if, indeed he could truly be said to entertain any, he resolved by delicately communicating his apprehensions, to gradually prepare her mind for the worst that might happen.

CHAPTER XII.

ON hearing her brother's step, she raised her head, and advancing towards the middle of the garden, took his arm, and led him towards the summer-house in which Connor and she had first acknowledged their love. She gazed wistfully upon it after they entered, and wrung her hands, but still shed no tear.

"Una," said her brother, "you had something to say to me ; what is it, darling?"

She glanced timidly at him, and blushed.

"You won't be angry with me, John," she replied ; "would it be proper for me to—to go——"

"What! to be present at the trial! Dear Una, you cannot think of it. It would neither be proper nor prudent; and you surely would not be considered indelicate? Besides, even were it not so, your strength is unequal to it. No, no, Una dear; dismiss it from your thoughts."

"I fear I could not stand it, indeed, John, even if it were proper; but I know not what to do; there is a weight like death upon my heart. If I could shed a tear it would relieve me; but I cannot."

"It is probably better you should feel so, Una, than entertain hopes upon the matter that may be disappointed. It is always wisest to prepare for the worst, in order to avoid the shock that may come upon us, and which always falls heaviest when it comes contrary to our expectations."

"I do not at all feel well," she replied, "and I have been thinking of the best way to break this day's tidings to me, when you come home. If he's cleared, say, good humouredly, 'Una, all's lost;' and if—if not, oh, desire me—say to me, 'Una, you had better go to bed, and let your mother go with you;' *that* will be enough ;

I will go to bed, and if ever I rise from it again, it will not be from a love of life."

The brother seeing that conversation on the subject of her grief only caused her to feel more deeply, deemed it better to terminate than continue a dialogue which only aggravated her sufferings.

"I trust and hope, dear Una," he said, "that you will observe my father's advice, and make at least a worthy effort to support yourself, under what certainly is a heavy affliction to you, in a manner becoming your own character. For his sake—for my mother's, and for mine too, endeavour to have courage; be firm—and, Una, if you take my advice, you'll pray to God to strengthen you; for after all, there is no support in the moment of distress and sorrow like His."

"I will take your advice," she replied; "but is it not strange, John, that such heavy misfortune should fall upon two persons so young, and who deserve it so little?"

"It may be a trial sent for your advantage and his; who can say but it may yet end for the good of you both? At present, indeed, there is no probability of its ending favourably, and even should it not, we are bound to bear with patience such dispensations as the Great Being to whom we owe our existence, and of whose ways we know so little, may think right to lay upon us. Now, God bless you, and support you, dear, till I see you again! I must go; don't you hear the jaunting-car coming up to the gate? be firm, dear Una, be firm, and good-bye!"

Never was a day spent under the influence of a more terrible suspense than that which drank up the strength of this sinking girl during the trial of her lover. Actuated by a burning and restless sense of distraction, she passed from place to place with that mechanical step which marks those who seek for comfort in vain. She retired to her apartment and strove to pray; but the effort was fruitless; the confusion of her mind rendered

connection and continuity of thought and language impossible. At one moment she repaired to the scenes where they had met, and again with a hot and aching brain, left them with a shudder that arose from the withering conception of the loss of him whose image, by their associations, was at once rendered more distinct and more beloved. Her poor mother frequently endeavoured to console her, but became too much affected herself to proceed. Nor were the servants less anxious to remove the heavy load of sorrow which weighed down her young spirit to the earth. Her brief but affecting reply was the same to each.

"Nothing can comfort me; my heart is breaking; oh, leave me—leave me to the sorrow that's upon me."

Deep indeed was the distress felt on her account, even by the females of her father's house, who that day shed many tears on witnessing the mute but feverish agony of her sufferings. As evening approached she became evidently more distracted and depressed; her head, she said, felt hot, and her temples occasionally throbbed with considerable violence. The alternations of colour on her cheek were more frequent than before, and their pallid and carmine hues were more alarmingly contrasted. Her weeping mother took the stricken one to her bosom, and after kissing her burning and passive lips, pressed her temples, with a hope that this might give her relief.

"Why don't you cry, *anien machree*? (daughter of my heart). Thry and shed tears; it 'ill take away this burnin' pain that's in your poor head; oh, thry an' let down the tears, an' you'll see how it 'ill relieve you."

"Mother, I can't," she replied; "I can shed no tear; I wish they were home, for the worst couldn't be worse than this."

"No, asthore, it couldn't—it can't; hush!—do you hear it? There they are; that's the car; ay, indeed, it's at the gate."

They both listened for a moment, and the voices of

her father and brother were distinctly heard giving some necessary orders to the servant.

"Mother, mother," exclaimed Una, pressing her hands upon her heart, "my heart is bursting, and my temples—my temples——"

"Chierna yeelish," said the mother, feeling its strong and rapid palpitations, "you can't stand this! Oh, darlin' of my heart, for the sake of your own life, an' of the livin' God, be firm."

At this moment their knock at the hall-door occasioned her to leap, with a sudden start, almost out of her mother's arms. But, all at once, the tumult of that heart ceased, and the vermillion of her cheek changed to the hue of death. With a composure, probably more the result of weakness than fortitude, she clasped her hands, and giving a fixed gaze towards the parlour-door, that spoke the resignation of despair, she awaited the tidings of her lover's doom. They both entered, and after a cautious glance about the room, immediately perceived the situation in which, reclining on her mother's bosom, she lay, ghastly as a corpse, before them.

"Una dear," said John approaching her, "I am afraid you are ill."

She rivetted her eyes upon him, as if she would read his soul, but she could not utter a syllable.

The young man's countenance became overshadowed by a deep and mournful sense of the task he found himself compelled to perform; his voice faltered, and his limbs trembled, as in a low tone of heartfelt and profound sympathy, he exclaimed—

"Una dear, you had better go to bed, and let my mother stay with you."

Calmly she heard him, and rising, she slowly but deliberately left the room, and proceeded up stairs with a degree of steadiness which surprised her mother. The only words she uttered, on hearing this blighting communication, were "Come with me, mother."

"Una darling," said the latter, when they had reached the bed-room, "why don't you spake to me? Let me hear your voice, jewel; only let me hear your voice."

Una stooped and affectionately kissed her, but made no reply for some minutes. She then began to undress, which she did by fits and starts; sometimes pausing in evident abstraction for a considerable time, and again resuming the task of preparing for bed.

"Mother," she at length said, "my heart is as cold as ice; but my brain is burning; feel my temples, how hot they are, and how they beat."

"I do, alanna dheelish; your body as well as your mind, is sick; but we'll sind for the docthor, darlin' and you'll soon be betther, I hope."

"I hope so; and then Connor and I can be married in spite of them. Don't they say, mother, that marriages are made in heaven?"

"They do, darlin'."

"Well, then, I will meet him there. Oh, my head—my head; I cannot bear—bear this racking pain."

Her mother, who, though an uneducated woman, was by no means deficient in sagacity, immediately perceived that her mind was beginning to exhibit symptoms of being unsettled. Having, therefore, immediately called one of the maid-servants, she gave her orders to stay with Una, who had now gone to bed, until she herself could again return to her. She instantly proceeded to the parlour, where her husband and son were, and, with a face pale from alarm, told them that she feared Una's mind was going.

"May the Almighty forbid," exclaimed her father, laying down his knife and fork; for they had just sat down to dinner; "oh, what makes you say such a thing, Bridget? what on earth makes you think it?"

"For heaven's sake, mother, tell us at once!" inquired the son, rising from the table and walking distractedly across the room.

"Why she's beginnin' to rave about him," replied her mother; "she's afther sayin' that she'll be married to him in spite o' them."

"In spite o' who, Bridget?" asked the Bodagh, wiping his eyes—"In spite o' who does she mane?"

"Why, I suppose, in spite o' Flanagan and thim that found him guilty," replied his wife.

"Well, but what else did she say, mother?"

"She axed me if marriages warn't made in heaven, and I tould her that the people said so; upon that she said she'd meet him there, an' then she complained of her head. The trewth is, she has a heavy load of sickness on her back, an' the sorra hour should be lost till we get a docthor."

"Yes, that is the truth, mother; I'll go this moment for Doctor H——. There's nothing like taking these things in time. Poor Una! God knows this trial is a sore one upon a heart so faithful and affectionate as hers."

"John, had you not betther ait something before you go?" said his father; "you want it afther the troublesome day you had."

"No, no," replied the son; "I cannot—I cannot; I will neither eat nor drink till I hear what the doctor will say about her. Oh, my God," he exclaimed, whilst his eyes filled with tears, "and is it to come to this with you, our darling Una?—I won't lose a moment till I return," he added, as he went out; "nor will I, under any circumstances, come without medical aid of some kind."

"Let these things be taken away, Bridget," said the Bodagh; "my appetite is gone, too; that last news is the worst of all. May the Lord of heaven keep our child's mind right; for, oh, Bridget, wouldn't death itself be far afore *that*?"

"I'm goin' up to her," replied his wife; "and may Jasus guard her, and spare her safe and sound to us! For what—what kind of a house would it be if she——"

but I can't think of it. Oh, wurrah, wurrah, this night!"

Until the return of their son with the physician, both O'Brien and his wife hung in a state of alarm bordering on agony over the bed of their beloved daughter. Indeed the rapidity and vehemence with which incoherence, accompanied by severe illness, set in, were sufficient to excite the greatest alarm, and to justify their darkest apprehensions. Her skin was hot almost to burning; her temples throbbed terribly, and such were her fits of starting and raving, that they felt as if every moment were an hour, until the physician actually made his appearance. Long before this gentleman reached the house, the son had made him fully acquainted with what he looked upon as the immediate cause of her illness; not that the doctor himself had been altogether ignorant of it; for indeed there were few persons of any class or condition in the neighbourhood to whom the circumstance was unknown.

On examining the symptoms that presented themselves, he pronounced her complaint to be brain fever of the most formidable class, to wit, that which arises from extraordinary pressure upon the mind, and unusual excitement of the feelings. It was a relief to her family, however, to know that beyond the temporary mental aberrations inseparable from the nature of her complaint, there was no evidence whatsoever of settled insanity. They felt grateful to God for this, and were consequently enabled to watch her sick-bed with more composure, and to look forward to her ultimate recovery with a hope less morbid and gloomy. In this state we are now compelled to leave them and her, and to beg the reader will accompany us to another house of sorrow, where the mourning was still more deep, and the spirits that were wounded driven into all the wild and dreary darkness of affliction.

Our readers cannot forget the helpless state of intoxication, in which Fardorougha left his unhappy

son on the evening of the calamitous day that saw him doomed to an ignominious death. His neighbours, as we then said having procured a car, assisted him home, and would, for his wife's and son's sake, have afforded him all the sympathy in their power; he was, however, so completely overcome by the spirits he had drank, and an unconscious latent feeling of the dreadful sentence that had been pronounced upon his son, that he required little else at their hands than to keep him steady on the car. During the greater part of the journey home, his language was only a continuation of the incoherencies which Connor had, with such a humiliating sense of shame and sorrow, witnessed in his prison-cell. A little before they arrived within sight of his house, his companions perceived that he had fallen asleep; but to a stranger, ignorant of the occurrences of the day, the car presented the appearance of a party returning from a wedding, or from some other occasion equally festive and social. Most of them were the worse of liquor, and one of them in particular had reached a condition which may be too often witnessed in this country. I mean that in which the language becomes thick; the eye knowing, but vacant; the face impudent, but relaxed; the limbs tottering, and the voice inveterately disposed to melody. The general conversation, therefore, of those who accompanied the old man was, as is usual with persons so circumstanced, high and windy; but as far as could be supposed by those who heard them, cheerful and amicable. Over the loudness of their dialogue might be heard, from time to time, at a great distance, the song of the drunken melodist just alluded to, rising into those desperate tones which borrow their drowsy energy from intoxication alone. Such was the character of those who accompanied the miser home; and such were the indications conveyed to the ears or eyes of those who either saw or heard them, as they approached Fardoroughia's dwelling, where the unsleeping heart of the

mother watched—and oh, with what a dry and burning anguish of expectation, let our readers judge—for the life or death of the only child that God had ever vouchsafed to that loving heart on which to rest all its tenderest hopes and affections.

The manner in which Honor O'Donovan spent that day was marked by an earnest and simple piety that would have excited high praise and admiration if witnessed in a person of rank or consideration in society. She was, as the reader may remember, too ill to be able to attend the trial of her son, or as she herself expressed it in Irish, “to draw strength to her heart by one look at his manly face—by one glance from her boy's eye.” She resolved, however, to draw consolation from a higher source, and to rest the burthen of her sorrows, as far as in her lay, upon that Being by whom alone support can be given; or if she descended from the elevation of true worship, to supplicate the intercession of departed spirits, let us attribute this rather to the dogmas of her creed than the errors of her heart. From the moment her husband left the threshold of his childless house on that morning, until his return, her prayers to God and the saints were truly incessant. And who is so well acquainted with the inscrutable ways of the Almighty, as to dare assert that the humble supplications of this pious and sorrowful mother were not heard and answered? Whether it was owing to the fervour of an imagination, wrought upon by the influence of a creed which nourishes religious enthusiasm in an extraordinary degree, or whether it was by direct support from that God who compassionated her affliction, let others determine; but certain it is, that in the course of that day she gained a calmness and resignation, joined to an increased fortitude of heart, such as she had not hoped to feel under a calamity so black and terrible.

On hearing the approach of the car which bore her husband home, and on listening to the noisy mirth of

those, who, had they been sober, would have sincerely respected her grief, she put up an inward prayer of thanksgiving to God for what she supposed to be the happy event of Connor's acquittal. Stunning was the blow, however, and dreadful the revulsion of feeling, occasioned by the discovery of this sad mistake. When she reached the door she felt still further persuaded that all had ended as she wished, for to nothing else, except the wildness of unexpected joy, could she think of ascribing her husband's intoxication.

"We must carry Fardoroughia in," said one of them to the rest; "for the liquor has fairly overcome him—he's sound asleep."

"He is cleared," exclaimed the mother; "my son is cleared! My heart tells me he has come out without a stain! What else could make his father, that never tasted liquor for the last thirty years, be as he is?"

"Honor O'Donovan," said one of them, wringing her hand as he spoke, "this has been a black day to you all; you must prepare yourself for bad news."

"Thin Christ and his blessed mother support me, and support us all! but what is the worst? oh! what is the worst?"

"The *barradh dhu*,"* replied the man, alluding to the black cap which the judge puts on when passing sentence of death.

Well," said she, "may the name of the Lord that sent this upon us be praised for ever? That's no reason why we shouldn't still put our trust and reliance in him. I will show them by the help of God's grace, an' by the assistance of his blessed mother, who suffered herself—an' oh! what is my sufferings to her's?—I will show them, I say, that I can bear, as a Christian ought, whatever hard fate it may please the Saviour of the earth to lay upon us. I am sure my son is innocent, an' surely, although it's hard, hard

* Literally "the black cap."

to part with sich a boy, yet it's a consolation to know that he'll be better wid God, who is takin' him, than ever he'd be wid us. So the Lord's will be done this night and for ever! amin!"

This noble display of glowing piety and fortitude was not lost upon those who witnessed it. After uttering these simple but exalted sentiments, she crossed herself devoutly, as is the custom, and bowed her head with such a vivid sense of God's presence, that it seemed as if she actually stood, as no doubt she did, under the shadow of his power. These men, knowing the force of her love to that son, and the consequent depth of her misery at losing him by a death so shameful and violent, reverently took of their hats as she bent her head to express this obedience to the decrees of God, and in a subdued tone and manner exclaimed, almost with one voice—

"May God pity you, Honor! for who but yourself would or could act as you do this bitther, bitther night!"

"I'm only doin' what I ought to do," she replied; "what is religion good for if it doesn't keep the heart right, an' support us undher thrials like this, what 'ud it then be but a name? But how, oh how came *his* father to be in sich a state on this bitther, bitther night, as you say it is—an' oh! heaven above sees it's that—how came *his* father, I say, into sich a state?"

They then related the circumstance as it actually happened; and she appeared much relieved to hear that his inebriety was only accidental.

"I am glad," she said, "that he got it as he did; for indeed if he had made himself dhrunk this day, as too many like him do on sich occasions, he never again would appear the same man in my eyes, nor would my heart ever more warm to him as it did. But thanks be to God that he didn't take it of himself!"

She then heard, with a composure that could result only from fortitude and resignation united, a more

detailed account of her son's trial, after which she added—

“As God is above me this night, I find it easier to lose Connor than to forgive the man that destroyed him; but this is a bad state of heart, that I trust my Saviour will give me grace to overcome; an' I know he will if I ax it as I ought; at all evints, I won't lay my side on a bed this night until I pray to God to forgive Bartle Flanagan, an' to turn his heart.”

She then pressed them with a spirit as hospitable as it was pious, to partake of food, which they declined, from a natural reluctance to give trouble where the heart is known to be pressed down by the violence of domestic calamity. These are distinctions which our humble countrymen draw with a delicacy that may well shame those who move in a higher rank of life. Respect for unmerited affliction, and sympathy for the sorrows of the just and virtuous, are never withheld by the Irish peasant who unfortunately is taught by two deep an experience with calamity to feel for others. The dignity, for instance, of Honor O'Donovan's bearing under a trial so overwhelming in its nature, and the piety with which she supported it, struck them, half tipsy as they were, so forcibly, that they became sobered down—some of them into a full perception of her firmness and high religious feeling; and those who were more affected by drink into a maudlin gravity of deportment still more honourable to the admirable principles of the woman who occasioned it.

One of the latter, for instance, named Bat Hanratty, exclaimed, after they had bade her good night, and expressed their unaffected sorrow for the severe loss she was about to sustain.

“Well, well, you may all talk; but, be the powdhers o' delf, nothin' barrin' the downright grace o' God could sup—sup-port that dacent mother of ould Fardoroughia—I mane of his son, poor Connor. But the truth is, you see, that there's nothin'—nothin'—no, the devil

saize the hap'o'rth at all, good, bad, or indifferent aquil to puttin' your trust in God; bekaise, you see—Con Roach, I say—bekaise, you see, when a man does that as he ought to do it; for it's all *faisthelagh* if you go the wrong way about it; but Con—Condy, I say, you're a dacent man; an' it stands to raison—it does, boys—upon my sowl, it does. It wasn't for nothin' that money was lost upon myself, when I was takin' in the edjiggation; and maybe, if Connor O'Donovan, that is now goin' to suffer, poor fellow—

' For the villian swore away my life, an' all by parjuree;
And for that same I die wid shame upon the gallows tree.'

So, as I was sayin', why didn't Connor come in an' join the boys* like another, an' then we could settle Bartle for *staggin'* against him. For you see, in regard o' that, Condy, it doesn't signify a traneeen whether he put a match to the haggard or not; the thing is, you know, that even if he did, Bartle darn't swear against him widout breaking his first oath to the boys; an' if he did it afther that, an' brought any of them into throuble conthrairy to the Articles, be gorra, sure he'd be entitled to get a gusset opened undher one o' his ears, any how. But you see, Con, be the book—God pardon me for swearin'—but be the book, the mother has the thrue ralligion in her heart, or she'd never stand it the way she does, an' that proves what I was expoundin'; that afther all, the sorra hap'o'rth aquil to the grace of God. I can repate the *Conweecture*† in Latin myself, an', upon my sowl, I find that afther a hard day's fightin' or drinkin, it aises my mind all to pieces. Sure they say one bout of it in Latin is worth half a dozin rosaries; for, you see, the Latin bein' the mother tongue in heaven, that's what gives sich power

* Become a Ribbonman.

† The *Confiteor*, a Latin confession of sin, addressed by Roman Catholics to God and the Saints.

entirely to prayers that's offered up in that langridge, an' what makes our clargy so powerful beyant all others."

He then sang a comic song, and, having passed an additional eulogium on the conduct of Honor O'Donovan, concluded by exhibiting some rather unequivocal symptoms of becoming pathetic from sheer sympathy; after which the soporific effect of his libations soon hushed himself into a snore that acted as a base to the shrill tones in which his companions addressed one another from each side of the car.

CHAPTER XIII.

FARDOROUGH, ever since the passion of avarice had established its accursed dominion in his heart, narrowed by degrees his domestic establishment, until, towards the latter years of his life, it consisted of only a labouring boy, as the term is, and a servant girl. Indeed, no miser ever was known to maintain a large household: and that for reasons too obvious to be detailed. Since Connor's incarceration, however, his father's heart had so far expanded, that he hired two men as inside servants,* one of them now the father of a large family, being the identical Nogher M'Cormick, who, as the reader remembers, was in his service at the period of Connor's birth. The other was a young man named Thady Star, or Reillaghan, as it is called in Irish, who was engaged upon the recommendation of Biddy Nulty, then an established favourite with her master and mistress, in consequence of her faithful devotion to them and Connor, and her simple-hearted participation in their heavy trouble. The manner in which they received the result of their son's trial was not indeed calculated to sustain his mother. In the midst of the clamour, however, she was calm and composed; but it would have been evident to a close observer that a deep impression of religious duty alone sustained her, and that the yearnings of the mother's heart, though stilled by resignation to the Divine Will, were yet more intensely agonized by the suppression of what she secretly felt. Such, however, is the motive of those heroic acts of self-denial, which religion only can enable us to perform. It does not harden the heart, or prevent it from feeling the full force of the calamity or sorrow which comes upon us; no, but

* That is, labourers who board and lodge in the family.

whilst we experience it in all the rigour of distress, it teaches us to reflect that suffering is our lot, and that it is our duty to receive these severe dispensations in such a manner as to prevent others from being corrupted by our impatience, or by our open want of submission to the decrees of Providence. When the agony of the Man of Sorrows was at its highest, he retired to a solitary place, and whilst every pore exuded water and blood, he still exclaimed—"Not my will, but thine be done!" Here was resignation indeed, but at the same time a heart exquisitely sensible of all it had to bear. And much, indeed, yet lay before that of the pious mother of our unhappy hero, and severe was the trial which, on this very night, she was doomed to encounter.

When Fardoroughia awoke, which he did not do until about three o'clock in the morning, he looked wildly about him, and, starting up in the bed, put his two hands on his temples, like a man distracted by acute pain; yet anxious to develope in his memory the proceedings of the foregoing day. The inmates, however, were startled from their sleep by a shriek, or rather a yell, so loud and unearthly that, in a few minutes, they stood collected about his bed. It would be impossible, indeed, to conceive, much less to describe such a picture of utter horror as then presented itself to their observation. A look that resembled the turbid glare of insanity, was fixed upon them whilst he uttered shriek after shriek, without the power of articulating a syllable. The room, too, was dim and gloomy; for the light of the candle that was left burning beside him, had become ghastly for want of snuffing. There he sat—his fleshless hands pressed against his temples; his thin, grey hair standing out wildly from his head; his lips asunder; and his cheeks sucked in so far that the chasms occasioned in his jaw-bones, by the want of his back teeth, were plainly visible.

"Chiernah dheelish," exclaimed Honor, "what is

this? as heaven's above me, I believe he's dyin'; see how he gasps. Here, Fardorougha," she exclaimed, seizing a jug of water which had been left on the chair beside him, but which he evidently had not seen, "here, here, darlin', wet your lips; the cool wather will refresh you."

He immediately clutched the jug with eager and trembling hands, and at one rapid draught emptied it to the bottom.

"Now," he shouted, "I can spake; now I can spake. Where's my son? where's my son?" an' what has happened *me*? how did I come here? was I mad? am I mad? but tell me, tell me first, where's Connor? Is it throe? is it all throe? or is it me that's mad?"

"Fardorougha, dear," said his wife, "be a man, or rather be a Christian. It was God gave Connor to us, and who has a better right to take him back from us? Don't be flyin' in His face, bekase he wont ordher every thing as you wish. You have n't taken off of you to-night,—so rise, dear, and calm yourself; then go to your knees, lift your heart to God, and beg of him to grant you strinth and patience. Thry that coorse, avourneen, an' you'll find it the best."

"How did I come home, I say? oh, tell me, Honor, tell me, was I out o' my wits?"

"You fainted," she replied; "and thin they gave you whiskey to support you; an' not bein' accustomed to it, it got into your head."

"Oh, Honor, our son! our son!" he replied; then, starting out of the bed in a fit of the wildest despair, he clasped his hands together, and shrieked out, "oh, our son, our son, our son Connor! Merciful Saviour, how will I name it? to be hanged by the neck! Oh, Honor, Honor, don't you pity me? Mother of heaven, this night! That *barradh dhu*, that *barradh dhu* put on for our boy, our innocent boy! who can undherstand it, Honor? It's not justice; there's no justice in heaven, or my son wouldn't be murdhered, slaughtered down in

the prime of his life, for no rason. But no matter; let him be taken; only hear this—if he goes, I'll never bend my knee to a single prayer while I've life; for it's terrible, it's cruel, 'tisin't justice—nor do I care what becomes of me, either in this world or the other. All I want, Honor, is to folly *him* as soon as I can; my hopes, my happiness, my life, my every thing is gone wid him; an' what need I care thin what becomes of me? I don't, I don't."

The faces of the domestics grew pale as they heard, with silent horror, the incoherent blasphemies of the frantic man; but his wife, whose eyes were riveted on him while he spoke, and while he paced, with a hurried step, up and down the room, felt at a loss whether to attribute his impiety to an attack of insanity, or to a temporary fever brought on by his late sufferings, and the intoxication of the preceding night.

"In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Fardorougha," she said calmly, placing her hand upon his shoulder; "are you sainsible that you're this minute afther blasphemin' your Creator?"

He gave her a quick, disturbed, and peevish look; but made no reply. She then proceeded:

"Fardorougha, I thought the loss of Connor the greatest punishment that could be put upon me; but I find I was mistaken. I would rather see him dead to-morrow, wid the rope about his neck, than to hear his father blasphemin' the livin' God! Fardorougha, it's clear that you're not now fit to pray for yourself, but in the name of our Saviour, I'll go an' pray for you. In the mane time go to bed; sleep will settle your head, and you will be better, I trust, in the mornin'."

The calm solemnity of her manner awed him, notwithstanding the vehemence of his grief. He stood and looked at her, with his hands tightly clasped, as she went to her son's bed-room in order to pray for him. For a moment he seemed abashed and stunned. While she addressed him, he involuntarily ceased to utter those

sounds of anguish, which were neither shrieks nor groans, but something between them both. He then resumed his pace, but with a more settled step, and for some minutes maintained perfect silence.

"Get me," said he, at length, "get me a drink of water; I'm in a flame wid drouth."

When Biddy Nalty went out to fetch him this, he inquired of the rest what Honor meant by charging him with blasphemy.

"Surely, I didn't blasphame," he said, peevishly; "no, no, I'm not that bad; but, any how, let her pray for me; *her* prayer will be heard, if ever woman's was."

When Biddy returned, he emptied the jug of water with the same trembling eagerness as before; then clasped his hands again, and commenced pacing the room, evidently in a mood of mind about to darken into all the wildness of his former grief.

"Fardorougha," said Nogher M'Cormick; "I was undher this roof the night your manly son was born. I remimber it well; and I remimber, more betoken, I had to check you for flyin' in the face o' God that sent him to you. Instead o' feelin' happy and delighted, as you ought to a' done, an' as any other man but yourself would, you grew dark an' sulky, and grumbled bekase you thought there was a family comin'. I tould you that night to take care an' not be committin' sin; an' you may remimber, too, that I gev you chapther and verse for it out o' Scripthur: 'Vo be to the man that's born wid a millstone about his neck, espeshilly if he's to be cast into the *say*.' The truth is, Fardorougha, you warn't thankful to God for him; and you see that afther all, it doesn't do to go to loggerheads wid the Almighty. Maybe, had you been thankful for him, he wouldn't be where he is this night. Millstone! Faith it was a home thrust that same verse; for if you didn't earry the millstone about your neck, you had it in your heart; and you now see and feel the upshot. I'm now goin' fast into age myself; my hair is greyer than your

own, and I could take it to my death," said the honest fellow, while a tear or two ran slowly down his cheek, "that, exceptin' one o' my own childhre—and may God spare them to me—I couldn't feel more sorrow at the fate of any one livin' than at Connor's. Many a time I held him in these arms, and many a little play I made for him, an' many a time he axed me why his father didn't nurse him as I did; 'bekase,' he used to say, 'I would rather he would nurse me, nor any body else, barring my mother; an' after him, you, Nogher.'"

These last observations of his servant probed the heart of the old man to the quick; but the feeling which they excited was a healthy one; or, rather, the associations they occasioned threw Fardoroughia's mind upon the memory of those affections which avarice had suppressed, without destroying,

"I loved him, Nogher," said he, deeply agitated; "oh, none but God knows how I loved him, although I didn't an' couldn't bring myself to show it at the time. There was something upon me; a curse, I think, that prevented me; an' now that I love him as a father ought to do, I will not have him. Oh, my son, my son, what will become of me, after you? Heavenly Father, pity me and support me! Oh, Connor, my son, my son, what will become of me!"

He then sat down on the bed, and placing his hands upon his face, he wept long and bitterly. His grief now, however, was natural, for during the most violent of his paroxysms in the preceding hour, he shed not a tear; yet now they ran down his cheeks, and through his fingers in torrents.

"Cry on, cry on," said Nogher, wiping his own eyes; "it will lighten your heart; an' who knows but it's his mother's prayers that brought you to yourself, and got this relief for you. Go, Biddy," said he in a whisper to the servant-maid, "and tell the mistress to come here, she'll know best how to manage him, now that he's a little calm."

"God be praised," ejaculated Honor, on seeing him weep; "these tears will cool your head, avourneen; an' now, Fardorougha, when you're tired cryin', if you take my advice, you'll go to your knees, an' offer up five Pathers, five Aves, an' a Creed, for the grace of the Almighty to direct and strengthen you; and thin, afther that, go to bed, as I sed, an' you'll find how well you'll be afther a sound sleep."

"Honor," replied her husband, "avourneen machree, I think you'll save your husband's sowl yet, undher my merciful Saviour."

"Your son, undher the same merciful God will do it. Your heart was hard and godless, Fardorougha, and surely, if Connor's death 'll be the manes of savin' his father's sowl, wouldn't it be a blessin' instead of a misfortune? Think of it in that light, Fardorougha, and turn your heart to God. As for Connor, isn't it a comfort to know, that the breath won't be out of his body, till he's a bright angel in heaven?"

The old man wiped his eyes, and knelt down, first having desired them to leave him. When the prayers were recited, he called in Honor.

"I'm afeard," said he, "that my heart wasn't properly in them, for I couldn't prevent my mind from wandherin' to our boy."

This touching observation took the mother's affections by surprise. A tear started to her eye, but after what was evidently a severe struggle she suppressed it.

"It's not at once you can do it, Fardorougha; so don't be cast down. Now, go to bed in the name of God, and sleep; and may the Lord in heaven support you—and support us both! for oh, it's we that want it this night of sorrow!"

She then stooped down, and affectionately kissed him, and having wished him good night, she retired to Connor's bed, where, ever since the day of his incarceration, this well-tried mother and enduring Christian slept.

At this stage of our story, we will pause for a moment, to consider the state of mind and comparative happiness of the few persons who are actors in our humble drama.

To those capable of observing only human action, independently of the motives by which it is regulated, it may appear that the day which saw Connor O'Donovan consigned to a premature and shameful death, was one of unmingled happiness to Bartle Flanagan. They know little of man's heart, however, who could suppose this to be the case, or who could even imagine that he was happier than those on whom his revenge and perfidy had entailed such a crushing load of misery. It is, indeed, impossible to guess what the nature of that feeling must be, which arises from the full gratification of mean and diabolical malignity. Every action of the heart at variance with virtue and truth, is forced to keep up so many minute and fearful precautions, all of which are felt to be of vast moment at the time, that we question if ever the greatest glut of vengeance produced, no matter what the occasion may have been, any satisfaction capable of counterbalancing all the contingencies and apprehensions by which the mind is distracted both before and after its perpetration. The plan and accomplishment must both be perfect in all their parts—for if either fail only in a single point, all is lost, and the pleasure arising from them resembles the fruit which is said to grow by the banks of the Dead Sea—it is beautiful and tempting to the eye, but bitterness and ashes to the taste.

The failure of the County Treasurer, for instance, deprived Bartle Flanagan of more than half his revenge. He was certainly far more anxious to punish the father than the son, and were it not that he saw no other mode of effecting his vengeance on Fardoroughia, than by destroying the only object on earth that he loved next to his wealth, he would never have made the innocent pay the penalty of the guilty. As he had gone so far, how-

ever, self-preservation now made him anxious that Connor should die; as he knew his death would remove out of his way the only person in existence absolutely acquainted with his villany. One would think, indeed, that the sentence pronounced upon his victim ought to have satisfied him on that head. This, however, it failed to do. That sentence contained one clause, which utterly destroyed the completeness of his design, and filled his soul with a secret apprehension either of just retribution, or some future ill which he could not shake off, and for which the reward received for Connor's apprehension was but an ineffectual antidote. The clause alluded to in the judge's charge, viz.—“the recommendation of the jury to the mercy of the crown, in consideration of your youth and previous good conduct, shall not be overlooked”—sounded in his ears like some mysterious sentence that involved his own fate, and literally filled his heart with terror and dismay. Independently of all this, his villanous projects had involved him in a systematic course of guilt, which was yet far from being brought to a close. In fact, he now found by experience how difficult it is to work out a bad action with success, and how the means, and plans, and instruments necessary to it, must multiply and become so complicated and deep in guilt, that scarcely any single intellect, in the case of a person who can be reached by the laws, is equal to the task of executing a great crime against society, in a perfect manner. If this were so, discovery would be impossible, and revenge certain.

With respect to Connor himself it is only necessary to say that a short and well-spent life, and a heart naturally firm, deprived death of its greatest terrors. Still he felt it in some depressed moods a terrible thing indeed to reflect, that he, in the very fulness of strength and youth should be cut down from among his fellows—a victim without a crime, and laid with shame in the grave of a felon. But he had witnessed neither his mother's piety nor her example in vain, and it was in

the gloom of his dungeon that he felt the light of both upon his spirit.

"Surely," said he, "as I am to die, is it not better that I should die innocent than guilty? Instead of fretting that I suffer, a guiltless man, surely I ought to thank my God that I am so; an' that my soul hasn't to meet the sin of such a revengeful act as I'm now condemned for. I'll die, then, like a Christian man, putting my hope and trust in the mercy of my Redeemer—ever an' always hoping that by his assistance I will be enabled to do it."

Different, indeed, was the moral state and position of these two young men; the one, though shut up in his prison cell, was sustained by the force of conscious innocence, and that reliance upon the mercy of God, which constitutes the highest order of piety, and the noblest basis for fortitude; the other, on the contrary, disturbed by the tumultuous and gloomy associations of guilt, and writhing under the conviction, that although he had revenge, he had not satisfaction. The terror of crime was upon him, and he felt himself deprived of that best and only security, which sets all vain apprehensions at defiance, the consciousness of inward integrity. Who, after all, would barter an honest heart for the danger arising from secret villany, when such an apparently triumphant villain as Bartle Flanagan felt a deadly fear of Connor O'Donovan in his very dungeon? Such, however, is guilt, and such are the terrors that accompany it.

The circumstances which in Ireland usually follow the conviction of a criminal, are so similar to each other, that we feel it, even in this case, unnecessary to do more than give a mere sketch of Connor's brief life as a culprit. We have just observed that the only clause in the judge's charge which smote the heart of the traitor Flanagan with a presentiment of evil, was that containing the words in which something like a hope of having Connor's sentence mitigated was held

out to him, in consequence of the recommendation to mercy, by which the jury accompanied their verdict. It is very strange, on the other hand, that at the present stage of our story, neither his father nor mother knew any thing whatsoever of the judge having given expression to such a hope. The old man, distracted as he was at the time, heard nothing, or at least remembered nothing, but the awful appearance of the black cap, or as they term it in the country, the *barradh dhu*, and the paralysing words in which the sentence of death was pronounced upon his son. It consequently happened that the same clause in the charge already noticed, positively occasioned the misery of Bartle Flanagan on the one hand, and negatively of Connor's parents on the other.

The morning after the trial, Fardorougha was up as early as usual, but his grief was nearly as vehement and frantic as on the preceding night. It was observed, however—such is the power of sorrow to humanize and create sympathy in the heart—that when he arose, instead of peevishly and weakly obtruding his grief and care upon those about him, as he was wont to do, he now kept aloof from the room in which Honor slept, from an apprehension of disturbing her repose—a fact which none who knew his previous selfishness would have believed, had he not himself expressed in strong terms a fear of awakening her. Nor did this new trait of his character escape the observation of his own servants, especially of his honest monitor, Nogher M'Cormick.

“Well, well,” exclaimed this rustic philosopher, “see what God's affliction does. Faith it has brought Fardorougha to feel a trifle for *others*, as well as for *himself*. Who knows, begad, but it may take the mill-stone out of his heart yet? and if it does, my word to you, he may thank his wife, undher God, for it.”

Before leaving home that morning to see his son, he found with deep regret that Honor's illness had been so

much increased by the events of the preceding day, that she could not leave her bed. And now, for the first time a thought loaded with double anguish struck upon his heart.

"Saver of earth!" he exclaimed, "what would become of me if both should go and lave me alone? Ay, ay," he continued, "I see it. I see how aisily God might make my situation still worse than I thought it *could be*. Oh God forgive me my sins! and may God soften my heart! Amin!"

He then went to see his wife ere he set out for his unhappy son; and it was with much satisfaction that Honor observed a changed and chastened tone in his manner, which she had never, except for a moment at the birth of his child, noticed before. Not that his grief was much lessened, but it was more rational, and altogether free from the violence and impiety which had characterized it when he awoke from his intoxication.

"Honor," said he, "how do you find yourself this mornin', alanna? They tell me you're worse than you wor yestherda."

"Indeed, I'm weak enough," she replied, "and very much bate down, Fardorougha; but you know it's not our own stringth at any time that we're to depend upon, but God's. I'm not willin' to attempt any thing beyant my power at present. My seeing him now would do neither of us any good, and might be his mother's death. I must see him, to be sure, and I'll strive, plase God, to gather up a little strength for *that*."

"My heart's breakin', Honor, and I'm beginnin' to see I've acted a bad part to both of you all along. I feel it, indeed; and if it was the will o' God, I didn't care if——"

"Whisht, acushla, wisht—sich talk as that's not right. Think, Fardorougha, whether you acted a bad part towards God or not, and never heed us; an' think too, dear, whether you acted a bad or a good part towards the poor, an' them that was in distress and hardship,

an' that came to you for relief—they were your fellow-crathiers, Fardorougha, at all evints. Think of these things, I'm sayin', and never heed us. You know that Connor and I forgive you, but you aren't so sure whether God and them will."

These observations of this inestimable woman had the desired effect, which was, as she afterwards said, to divert her husband's mind as much as possible from the contemplation of Connor's fate, and to fix it upon the consideration of those duties in which she knew his conscience, now touched by calamity, would tell him he had been deficient.

Fardorougha was silent for some time after her last observations—but at length he observed;

"Would it be possible, Honor, that all this was brought upon us in ordher to punish me for—for——"

"To punish you, Fardorougha! *Fareer gairh, avourneen*, arn't we *all* punished? look at my worn face, and think of what ten days' sorrow can do in a mother's heart—think, too, of the boy. Oh no, no—do you think *we* have nothin' to be punished for! But we have all one comfort, Fardorougha, and that is, that God's ever and always willin' to resave us, when we turn to him wid a true heart. Nobody, avillish, can forget and forgive as he does."

"Honor, why didn't you oftener spake to me this way than you did?"

"I often did, dear, an' you may remember it; but you were then strong; you had your wealth; every thing flowed wid you, an' the same wealth—the world's timptation—was strong in your heart; but God has taken it from you, I hope as a blessin'—for indeed, Fardorougha, I'm afeard if you had it now, that neither he nor—but I won't say it, dear, for God he sees I don't wish to say one word that 'ud distress you now, avourneen. Any how, Fardorougha, never despair in God's goodness—never do it; who can tell what may happen?"

Her husband's grief was thus checked, and a train of serious reflection laid, which, like some of those self-evident convictions that fasten on the awakened conscience, the old man could not shake off.

Honor, in her further conversation with him touching the coming interview with the unhappy culprit, desired him above all things, to set "their noble boy" an example of firmness, and by no means to hold out to him any expectation of life.

"It would be worse than murder," she exclaimed, "to do so. No—prepare him by your advice, Fardoroughia, ay, and by your example to be firm—and tell him that his mother expects he will die like an innocent man—noble and brave—not like a guilty coward, afraid to look up and meet his God."

Infidels and hypocrites, so long as their career in vice is unchecked by calamity, will no doubt sneer when we assure them, that Fardoroughia, after leaving his wife that morning once more to visit his son, felt a sense of relief, or, perhaps we should say, a breaking of faint light upon his mind, which, slight as it was, afforded him more comfort and support than he ever hoped to experience. Indeed it was almost impossible for any heart to exist within the influence of that piety which animated his admirable wife, and not catch the holy fire which there burned with such purity and brightness.

Ireland, however, abounds with such instances of female piety and fortitude, not indeed, as they would be made to appear in the unfeminine violence of political turmoil, in which a truly pious female would not embroil herself; but in the quiet recess of domestic life—in the hard struggles against poverty, and in those cruel visitations, where the godly mother is forced to see her innocent son corrupted by the dark influence of political crime, drawn within the vortex of secret confederacy, and subsequently yielding up his life to the outraged laws of that country which he

assisted to distract. It is in scenes like these that the unostentatious magnanimity of the pious Irish wife or mother may be discovered; and it is here where as the night and storms of life darken her path, the holy fortitude of her heart shines with a lustre proportioned to the depth of the gloom around her.

When Fardorougha reached the town in which his ill-fated son occupied the cell of a felon, he found to his surprise that early as had been his habits, there were others whose movements had been still more early than his own. John O'Brien had come to town—been with his attorney—had got a memorial in behalf of Connor to the Irish government engrossed and actually signed by more than one half of the jury who tried him—all before the hour of ten o'clock. A copy of this document, which was written by O'Brien himself, now lies before us, with the names of all the jurors attached to it; and a more beautiful or affecting piece of composition we have never read. The energy and activity of O'Brien were certainly uncommon, and so, indeed, were his motives. As he himself told Fardorougha, whom he met as the latter entered the town—

"I am doing what I can for Connor, although I have never yet exchanged a syllable with him. Still, I do assure you, Fardorougha, that I have other motives which you shall never know—far stronger than any connected with the fate of your son. Now, don't misunderstand me."

"No," replied the helpless old man, who was ignorant of the condition of O'Brien's sister, "I will not indeed—I'd be long sorry."

O'Brien saw that any rational explanation he might give would only be thrown away upon a man who seemed to be so utterly absorbed and stupified by the force of his own sufferings.

"Poor old man," he exclaimed, as Fardorougha left him to visit Connor, "see what affliction does! There

are thousands now who pity you—even *you*, whom almost every one who knew you cursed and detested.”

Such, indeed, was the fact. The old man's hardness of heart was forgotten in the pity that was produced by the dreadful fate which awaited his unhappy son. We must now pass briefly over occurrences which are better understood when left to the reader's imagination. John O'Brien was not the only one who interested himself in the fate of Connor. Fardorougha, as a matter of course, got the priest of the parish, a good and pious man, to draw up a memorial in the name, as he said, of himself and his wife. The gentry of the neighbourhood, also including the members of the grand Jury, addressed government on his behalf—for somehow there was created among those who knew the parties, or even who heard the history of their loves, a sympathy which resulted more from those generous impulses that intuitively perceive truth, than from the cooler calculations of reason. The heart never reasons—it is therefore the seat of feeling, and the fountain of mercy; the head does—and it is probable on that account the seat of justice, often of severity, and not unfrequently of cruelty and persecution. Connor himself was much relieved by that day's interview with his father. Even he could perceive a change for the better in the old man's deportment. Fardorougha's praises of Honor, and his strong allusions to the support and affection he experienced at her hands, under circumstances so trying, were indeed well calculated to prepare her “noble boy,” as she truly called him, for the reception of the still more noble message which she sent him.

“Father,” said he, as they separated that day, “tell my mother that I will die as she wishes me; and tell her, too, that if I wasn't an innocent man I could not do it. And oh, father,” he added, and he seized his hands, and fell upon his neck, “oh, father dear, if you love me, your own Connor—and I know you do—oh

then, father dear, I say again, be guided in this heavy affliction by my dear mother's advice."

"Connor," returned the old man deeply affected, "I will. I had made my mind up to that afore I saw you at all to-day. Connor, do you know what I'm beginnin' to think?"

"No, father dear, I do not."

"Why, then, it's this, that she'll be the manes of savin' your father's soul. Connor, I can look back now upon my money—all I lost—it was no doubt terrible—terrible all out—Connor, my rint is due, and I haven't the manes of meetin' it."

Alas, thought the boy, how hard is it to root altogether out of the heart that principle which inclines it to the love of wealth.

"At any rate, I will take your advice, Connor, and be guided by your mother. She's very poorly, or she'd be wid you afore now; but, indeed, Connor, her health is the occasion of it—it is—it is!"

Fardorougha's apology for his wife contained much more truth than he himself was aware of at the time he made it. On returning home that night, he found her considerably worse, but as she had been generally healthy, he very naturally ascribed her illness to the affliction she felt for the fate of their son. In this, however, he was mistaken, as the original cause of it was unconnected with the heavy domestic dispensation which had fallen upon them. So far as she was concerned, the fate of her boy would have called up from her heart fresh energy, and if possible a higher order of meek but pious courage. She would not have left him unsustained and uncherished, had the physical powers of the mother been able to second the sacred principles with which she met and triumphed over the trial that was laid upon her.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was one evening about ten days after O'Donovan's conviction that Bodagh Buie O'Brien's wife sat by the bed-side of her enfeebled and languishing daughter. The crisis of her complaint had passed the day before; and a very slight improvement, visible only to the eye of her physician, had taken place. Her delirium remained much as before; sometimes returning with considerable violence, and again leaving reason, though feeble and easily disturbed, yet when unexcited by external causes, capable of applying its powers to the circumstances around her. On this occasion the mother, who watched every motion and anticipated every wish of the beloved one, saw that she turned her eye several times upon her as if some peculiar anxiety distressed her.

"Una, jewel," she at length inquired, "is there any thing you want, *colleen machree*; or any thing I can do for you?"

"Come near me, mother," she replied, "come near me."

Her mother approached her still more nearly.

"I'm afraid," she said in a very low voice, "I'm afraid to ask it."

"Only wait for a minute or two," said her mother, "an' John will—but here's the docthor's foot; they wor spakin' a word or two below; an' whisper, darlin' o' my heart, sure John has something to tell you—something that will—"

She looked with a searching anxiety into her mother's face; and it might have been perceived that the morning twilight as it were of hope beamed faintly but beautifully upon her pale features. The expression that passed over them was indeed so light and transient that one could scarcely say she smiled; yet that a more perceptible serenity diffused its gentle irradiation over her languid countenance was observed even by her mother.

The doctor's report was favourable.

"She is slowly improving since yesterday," said he, on reaching the parlour; "I am afraid, however, she's too weak at present to sustain this intelligence. I would recommend you to wait for a day or two, and in the mean time to assume a cheerful deportment, and break it to her rather by your looks and manner than by a direct or abrupt communication."

They promised to observe his directions; but when her mother informed them of the hint she herself threw out to her, they resolved to delay the matter no longer; and John, in consequence of what his mother had led her to expect, went to break the intelligence to her as well as he could. An expectation had been raised in her mind, and he judged properly enough that there was less danger in satisfying it than in leaving her just then in a state of such painful uncertainty.

"Dear Una," said he, "I am glad to hear the doctor say that you are better."

"I think I am a little," said she.

"What was my mother saying to you, just now, before the doctor was with you? But why do you look at me so keenly, Una?" said he cheerfully; "it's some time since you saw me in such good humour—isn't it?"

She paused for a moment herself; and her brother could observe that the hope which his manner was calculated to awaken, lit itself into a faint smile rather visible in her eyes than on her features.

"Why, I believe you are smiling yourself, Una."

"John," said she, earnestly, "is it good?"

"It is darling—he *won't die*."

"Oh! kiss me, kiss me," she said, "and may eternal blessings rest upon you!"

She then kissed him affectionately, laid her head back upon the pillow, and John saw with delight that the large tears of happiness rolled in torrents down her pale cheeks.

It was indeed true that Connor O'Donovan was not to

die. The memorials which had reached government from so many quarters, backed as they were by very powerful influence, and detailing as they did a case of such very romantic interest, could scarcely fail in arresting the execution of so stern and deadly a sentence. It was ascertained, too, by the correspondence of his friends with government, that the judge who tried his case, notwithstanding the apparent severity of his charge, had been moved by an irresistible impulse to save him; and he actually determined from the beginning to have his sentence commuted to transportation for life.

The happy effect of this communication on Una O'Brien diffused a cheerful spirit among her family and relatives, who, in truth, had feared that her fate would ultimately depend upon that of her lover. After having been much relieved by the copious flood of tears she shed, and heard with composure all the details connected with the mitigation of his sentence, she asked her brother if Connor's parents had been yet made acquainted with it.

"I think not," he replied; "the time is too short."

"John," said the affectionate girl, "oh, consider his mother; and think of the misery that one single hour's knowledge of this may take away from her heart. Go to her, my dear John, and may all the blessings of heaven rest upon you!"

"Good bye, then, Una dear; I will go."

He took her worn hand in his, as he spoke, and looking on her with affectionate admiration, added—

"Yes! Good by, my darling sister; believe me Una, that I think if there's justice in heaven you'll have a light and happy heart yet."

"It is very light now," she returned, "compared with what it was; but go, John, don't lose a moment; *for I know what they suffer.*"

Her mother, after John's departure for Fardorough's, went up to sit with her; but she found that the previous

scene although it relieved, had exhausted her. In the course of a few minutes their limited dialogue ceased, and she sank into a sound and refreshing sleep, from which she did not awaken until her brother had some time returned from the execution of his pious message. And piously was that message received by her for whose misery the considerate heart of Una O'Brien felt so deeply.

Fardorougha had been out about the premises, mechanically looking to the manner in which the business of his farm had been of late managed by his two servants, when he descried O'Brien approaching the house at a quick if not a hurried pace. He immediately went in and communicated the circumstance to his wife.

"Honor," said he, "here is Bodagh Buie's son comin' up to the house—what on earth can bring the boy here?"

This was the first day on which his wife had been able to rise from her sick bed. She was consequently feeble; and physically speaking capable of no domestic exertion. Her mind, however, was firm as ever, and prompt as before her calamity, to direct and overlook in her own sweet and affectionate manner, whatever required her superintendence.

"I'm sure I don't know, Fardorougha," she replied. "It can't, I hope, be wid bad news—that thravels fast enough—an' I'm sure the Bodagh's son wouldn't take pleasure in bein' the first to tell it to us."

"But what can bring him, Honor? What on earth can bring the boy here now that never stood undher our roof afore?"

"Three or four minutes, Fardorougha, will tell us. Let us hope in God it isn't bad. Eh, it wouldn't be the death of his sister—of Connor's Oona? No," she added. "they wouldn't send, much less come, to tell us *that*, but sure we'll hear it—we'll hear it; and may God give us stringth to hear it right, whether it's good or bad! Amin, Jasus, this day!"

She had hardly uttered the last words when O'Brien entered.

"Young man," said this superior woman, "it's a poor welcome we can give you to a house of sorrow."

"Ay," said Fardoroughia, "his mother an' I's here; but where is *he*? Nine days from this—but it'll kill me—it will—it will. Whin he's taken from me I don't care how soon I folly him: God forgive me if it's a sin to say so!"

"Fardoroughia," said his wife, in a tone of affectionate reproof, "remimber what you promised me, an', at all events, you forget that Mr. O'Brien here may have his own troubles; I hard your sister was unwell. Oh, how is she, poor thing?"

"I thank you, a great deal better; I will not deny but she heard a piece of intelligence this day, that has relieved her mind and taken a dead weight off her heart."

Honor, with uncommon firmness and solemnity of manner, placed her hand upon his shoulder, and, looking him earnestly in the face said,

"That news is about our son?"

"It is," replied O'Brien, "and it's good; his sentence is changed, and he's not to die."

"Not to die!" shrieked the old man, starting up, and clapping his hands frantically—"not to die! our son—Connor, Connor—not to be hanged—not to be hanged! did you say that, son of O'Brien Buie—did you?—did you?"

"I did" replied the other; "he will not suffer."

"Now that's God!" ejaculated Fardoroughia wildly; "that's God—an' his mother's prayers. Boys," he shrieked, "come here; come here, Biddy Nulty, come here; Connor's not to die! he won't suffer—he won't suffer!"

He was rushing wildly to the door, but Honor placed herself before him, and said, in that voice of calmness which is uniformly that of authority and power.

"Fardorougha dear, calm yourself. If this is God's work, as you say, why not resave it as comin' from God; it's upon your two knees you ought to drop, an'—— Saver above, what's the matter wid him!—He's off; keep him up! Oh, God bless you; that's it, avourneen; jist place him on the chair there forninst the door, where he can have air. Here, dear," said she to Biddy Nulty, who, on hearing herself called by her master, had come in from another room; "get some feathers, Biddy, till we burn them under his nose; but first fetch a jug of could wather."

On looking at the face of the miser, O'Brien started, as indeed well he might, at such a pallid, worn, and death-like countenance; why, thought he to himself, surely this must be death, and the old man's cares, and sorrows, and hopes, are all passed away for ever.

Honor now bathed his face, and wet his lips with water, and as she sprinkled and rubbed back the grey hair from his emaciated temples, there might be read there an expression of singular wildness that resembled the wreck produced by insanity.

"He looks ill," observed O'Brien, who actually thought him dead; "but I hope it won't signify."

"I trust in God's mercy it won't," replied Honor; "for till his heart, poor man, is brought more to God——"

She paused with untaught delicacy, for she reflected that he was her husband.

"For that matther, who is there," she continued, "that is fit to go to their last account at a moment's warnin'? That's a good girl, Biddy; give me the feathers; there's nothin' like them. *Dheah Grasthias! Dheah Grasthias!*"* she exclaimed, "he's not gone—he's not—an' I was afeard he *was*——but no, he is recoverin'. Shake him; rouse him a little;—Fardorougha, dear!"

"Where—where am I?" exclaimed her husband, "what's this? what ails me?"

*Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God!

He then looked inquiringly at his wife and O'Brien; but it appeared that the presence of the latter revived in his mind the cause of his excitement.

"Is it—is it thrue, young man; tell me—tell me?"

"How, dear, can any one have spirits to tell you good news, when you can't bear it aither like a man or a Christian?"

"Good news, you say! Then it's thrue, an' he's not to be hanged by the neck, as the judge said; an' my curse—my heavy curse upon him for a judge!"

"I hate myself to hear the words of his sentence, Fardorougha," said the wife; "but if you have patience you'll find that his life's granted to him; an', for heaven's sake, curse nobody. The judge only did his duty,"

"Well," he exclaimed, sinking upon his knees, "now, from this day out, let what will happen, I'll stick to my duty to God—I'll repent—I'll repent an' lead a new life;—I will, an' while I'm alive I'll never say a word against the will of my heavenly Saviour; never, never!"

"Fardorougha," replied his wife, "it's good no doubt to have a grateful heart to God; but I'm afeard there's sin in what you're sayin', for you know, dear, that, whether it pleased the Almighty to take our boy, or not, what you've promised to do is your duty. It's like sayin', I'll now turn my heart *bekase God has deserved it at my hands*. Still, dear, I'm not goin' to condemn you, only I think it's betther an' safer to love an' obey God for his own sake, blessed be his holy name!"

Young O'Brien was forcibly struck by the uncommon character of Honor O'Donovan. Her patience, good sense, and sincere acquiescence in the will of God, under so severe a trial; were such as he had never seen equalled. Nor could he help admitting to himself, while contemplating her conduct, that the example of such a woman was not only the most beautiful comment on religious truth, but the noblest testimony of its power.

"Yes, Honor," said the husband, in reply, "you're

right, for I know that what you say is always true. It is indeed," he added, addressing O'Brien, "she's aquil to a prayer-book."

"Yes, and far superior to any," replied the latter; "for she not only gives you the advice, but sets you the example."

"Ay, the sorra lie in it; an', oh, Honor, he's not to die—he's not to be han—not to suffer! Our son's to live! Oh, Saver of earth, make me thankful this day!"

The tears ran fast from his eyes as he looked up to heaven, and uttered the last words. Indeed, it was impossible not to feel deep compassion for this aged man, whose heart had been smote so heavily, and on the only two points where it was capable of feeling the blow.

After having indulged his grief for some time, he became considerably more composed, if not cheerful. Honor made many kind inquiries after Una's health, to which her brother answered with strict candour, for he had heard from Una that she was acquainted with the whole history of their courtship.

"Who knows," said she, speaking with reference to their melancholy fate, "but the God who has saved his life, an' most likely hers, may yet do more for them both; while there's life there's hope."

"Young man," said Fardorougha, "you carry a blessin' wid you wherever you go, an' may God bless you for the news you have brought to us this day! I'll go to see him to-morrow, an' wid a light heart I'll go too, for my son is not to die!"

O'Brien then took his leave and returned home, pondering as he went, upon the singular contrast which existed between the character of the miser and that of his admirable wife. He was no sooner gone than Honor addressed her husband as follows:—

"Fardorougha, what do you think we ought both to do now, after the happy news we've heard?"

"I'll be guided by you, Honor; I'll be guided by you."

"Then," said she, "go an' thank God that has taken the edge, the bitter keen edge off of our sufferin'; and the best way, in my opinion, for you to do it, is to go to the barn by yourself, and strive to put your whole heart into your prayers. You'll pray betther by yourself than wid me. An' in the name o' God I'll do the same as well as I can in the house here. To-morrow too, is Friday, an' plaise our Saviour, we'll both fast in honour of his goodness to us an' to our son."

"We will, Honor," said he, "we will, indeed; for now I have spirits to fast, and spirits to pray, too. What will I say, now? Will I say the five Dickens (Decades) or the whole Rosary?"

"If you can keep your mind in the prayers, I think you ought to say the whole of it; but if you wandher don't say more than the five."

Fardorougha then went to pray, rather because his wife desired him, than from a higher motive, whilst she withdrew to her own apartment, here humbly to worship God in thanksgiving.

The next day had made the commutation of Connor's punishment a matter of notoriety through the whole parish, and very sincere indeed was the gratification it conveyed to all who heard it. Public fame, it is true, took her usual liberties with the facts. Some said he had got a free pardon, others that he was to be liberated after six months' imprisonment; and a third report asserted that the lord lieutenant sent him down a hundred pounds to fit him out for marriage with Una; and it further added that his excellency wrote a letter with his own hand to Bodagh Buie, desiring him to give his daughter to Connor on receipt of it, or if not, that the Knight of the Black Rod would come down, strip him of his property, and bestow it upon Connor and his daughter.

The young man himself was almost one of the first

who heard of this favourable change in his dreadful sentence.

He was seated on his bedside reading, when the sheriff and gaoler entered his cell, anxious to lay before him the reply which had that morning arrived from government.

"I'm inclined to think, O'Donovan, that your case is likely to turn out more favourably than we expected," said the humane sheriff.

"I hope, with all my heart, it may," replied the other; "there's no denying, sir, that I'd wish it. Life is sweet, especially to a young man of my years."

"But if we should fail," observed the gaoler, "I trust you will act the part of a man."

"I hope at all events that I will act the part of a Christian," returned O'Donovan. "I certainly would rather live; but I'm not afeard of death; and if it comes, I trust I will meet it humbly but firmly."

"I believe," said the sheriff, "you need entertain little apprehension of death; I'm inclined to think that that part of your sentence is not likely to be put in execution. I have heard as much."

"I think, sir, by your manner that you have," returned Connor; "but I beg you to tell me without goin' about. Don't be afeard, sir, that I'm too wake to hear either good news or bad."

The sheriff made no reply; but placed in his hands the official document which remitted to him the awful penalty of his life. Connor read it over slowly, and the other kept his eye fixed keenly upon his countenance, in order to observe his bearing under circumstances that are often known to try human fortitude as severely as death itself. He could, however, perceive no change; not even the unsteadiness of a nerve or muscle was visible, nor the slightest fluctuation in the hue of his complexion.

"I feel grateful to the lord lieutenant for his mercy to me," said he, handing him back the letter, "as I do

to the friends who interceded for me; I never will or can forget their goodness. Oh never, never!"

"I believe it," said the sheriff; "but there is one thing that I am anxious to press upon your attention; and it's this, that no further mitigation of your punishment is to be expected from government; so that you must make up your mind to leave your friends and your country for life, as you now know."

"I expect nothing more," returned Connor, "except this, that the hand of God may yet bring the guilt of the burning home to the man that committed it, and prove my innocence. I'm *now* not without some hope that such a thing may be brought about, some how. I thank you, Misther Sheriff, for your kindness in coming to me with this good news so soon; all I can say is, that I thank you from my heart. I am bound to say, too, that any civility and comfort that could be shown was afforded me ever since I came here; an' I feel it, an' I am grateful for it."

Both were deeply impressed by the firm tone of manly sincerity and earnestness with which he spoke, blended as it was by a melancholy which gave, at the same time, a character of elevation and pathos to all he said. They then shook hands with him, after chatting for some time on indifferent subjects, the gaoler promising to make his situation while he should remain in prison as easy as the regulations would allow him; "or who knows," he added, smiling, "but we might make them a little easier."

"That's a fine young fellow," said he to the sheriff, after they had left him.

"He is a gentleman," replied the sheriff,—"by nature a gentleman; and a very uncommon one too. I defy a man to doubt a word that comes out of his lips; all he says is impressed with the stamp of truth itself; and by Jove I feel certain he never committed the felony he's in for. Keep him as comfortable as you can."

They then separated.

The love of life is the first and strongest principle in

our nature, and what man is there except some unhappy wretch pressed down by long and galling misery to the uttermost depths of despair, who, knowing that life was forfeited, whether justly or not matters little, to the laws of his country, will not feel the mercy which bids him live with a corresponding sense of gratitude? The son of the pious mother acted as if she were still his guide and monitress.

He knelt down and poured out *his* gratitude to that Being who had the first claim upon it, and whose blessing he fervently invoked upon the heads of those true friends by whose exertions and influence he now felt that life was restored to him.

Of his life while he remained in this country there is little more to be said than what is usually known to occur in the case of other convicts similarly circumstanced, if we except his separation from the few persons who were dear to him. He saw his father the next day, and the old man felt almost disappointed on discovering that he was deprived of the pleasure which he proposed to himself of being the bearer of such glad tidings to him. Those who visited him, however, noticed, with a good deal of surprise, that he appeared as if labouring under some secret anxiety, which, however, no tact or address on their part could induce him to disclose. Many of them, actuated by the best motives, asked him in distinct terms why he appeared to be troubled; but the only reply they received was a good-humoured remark that it was not to be expected he could leave for ever all that was dear to him on earth with a *very* cheerful spirit.

It was at this period that his old friend, Nogher M'Cormick, came to pay him a visit; it being the last time, as he said, that he would ever have an opportunity of seeing his face. Nogher, whose moral impressions were by no means so correct as Connor's, asked him, with a face of dry, peculiar mystery, if he had any particular wish unfulfilled; or if there remained behind

him any individual against whom he entertained a spirit of enmity. If there were, he begged him to make no scruple in entrusting to him a full statement of his wishes on the subject, adding that he might rest assured of having them accomplished.

"One thing you may be certain of, Nogher," said he to the affectionate fellow, "that I have no sacrets to tell; so don't let that go abroad upon me. I have heard to-day," he added, "that the vessel we are to go in will sail on this day week. My father was here this mornin'; but I hadn't hard it then. Will you, Nogher, tell my mother privately that she mustn't come to see me on the day I appointed with my father. From the state of health she's in I'm tould she couldn't bear it. Tell her, then, not to come till the day before I sail; an' that I will expect to see her early on that day. And, Nogher, as you know more about this unhappy business than any one else except the O'Briens and ourselves, will you give this little packet to my mother? There's three or four locks of my hair in it: one of them is for Una; and desire my mother to see Una, and to get a link of her hair to wear next my heart. My poor father—now that he finds he must part with me—is so distracted and distressed, that I couldn't trust him with this message. I want it to be kept a sacret to every one but you, my mother, and Una; but my poor father would be apt to mention it in some fit of grief."

"But is there nothin' else on your mind, Connor?"

"There's no heavy guilt on my mind, Nogher, I thank my God and my dear mother for it."

"Well, I can tell you one thing before you go, Connor—Bartle Flanagan's well watched. If he has been guilty—if—derry downs, who doubts it?—well—never mind; I'll hould a trifle we get him to show the cloven foot, and condemn himself yet."

"The villain," said Connor, "will be too deep—too polished for you."

"Ten to one he's not. Do you know what we've found out since this business?"

"No."

"Why divil resave the squig of punch, whiskey, or liquor of any sort or size he'll allow to pass the lips of him. Now, Connor, aren't you up to the cunnin' villany of the thraitor in that maynewvre?"

"I am, Nogher; I see his design in it. He is afeard if he got drunk that he might n't be able to keep his own sacret."

"Ah, thin by the holy Nelly, we'll steep him yet, or he'll look sharp. Never you mind *him*, Connor."

"Nogher! stop," said Connor, almost angrily, "stop; what do you mane by them last words?"

"Divil a much; it's about the blaggard I'm spakin'; he'll be ped I can tell you. There's a few friends of yours that intinds, some o' these nights, to aise his windpipe a little; the divil a thing more."

"What! to take the unhappy man's life?—to murdher him!"

"Hut, Connor; who's spakin' about murdher? No, only to make him miss his breath some night afore long. Does he desearve mercy that 'ud swear away the life of an innocent man?"

"Nogher," replied the other, rising up and speaking with the utmost solemnity—

"If one drop of his blood is spilled on my account it will bring the vengeance of heaven upon the head of every man havin' a hand in it. Will you because he's a villain, make yourselves murderers?—make yourselves blacker than he is?"

"Why, thin, death alive, Connor, have you your seven sinsis about you? Faith that's good, as if it was a sin to knock sich a white-livered Judas upon the head! Sin!—oh divil a morsal o' sin's in that, but the contrairy. Sure it's only sarvin' honest people right, to knock such a desaiver on the head. If he had parjured himself for the sake of the thruth or to assist

a brother in throuble—or to help on the good cause—it would be something ; but to go to—hut—ara, be my sowl, he'll sup sarra for it, sure enough ! I thought it would make your mind aisy, or I wouldn't mintion it till we'd let the breath out of him."

"Nogher," said Connor, "before you leave this unfortunate room, you must take the Almighty to witness that you'll have no hand in this bloody business, an' that you'll put a stop to it altogether. If you don't—and that his life is taken ;—in the first place, I'll be miserable for life ; and in the next, take my word for it, that the judgment of God will fall heavily upon every one consarned in it."

"What for ? Is it for slittin' the jugler of sich a rip ? Isn't he as bad as a heretic, an' worse, for he turned against his own ? He has got himself made the head of a lodge, too, and houlds Articles ; but it's not bein' an Article-bearer that 'll save him, an' he'll find that to his cost. But, indeed, Connor, the villain's a double thraitor, as you'd own, if you *knewn* what I hard a hint of?"

"Well, but you must lave him to God."

"What, do you think but I got a whisper that he has bad designs on *her*."

"On who !" said O'Donovan, starting.

"Why on your own girl, Oona, the Bodagh's daughter. He intends, it's whispered, to take her off ; an' it seems, as her father doesn't stand well wid the boys, that Bartle's to get a great body of them to assist him in bringing her away."

Connor paced his cell in deep and vehement agitation. His resentment against this double-dyed villain rose to a fearful pitch ; his colour deepened—his eye shot fire, and, as he clenched his hand convulsively, Nogher saw the fury which this intelligence had excited in him.

"No," he proceeded, "it would be an open sin an' shame to let sich a netarnal limb of the devil escape."

It may, indeed, be said that O'Donovan never pro-

perly felt the sense of his restraint until this moment. When he reflected on the danger to which his beloved Una was exposed from the dark plans of this detestable villain, and recollected that there existed in the members of the illegal confederacy such a strong spirit of enmity against Bodagh Buie, as would induce them to support Bartle in his designs upon his daughter, he pressed his hand against his forehead, and walked about in a tumult of distress and resentment, such as he had never yet felt in his bosom.

"It's a charity it will be," said Nogher, shrewdly availing himself of the commotion he had created, "to stop the vagabone short in the coorse of his villany. He'll surely bring the darlin' young girl off, and destroy her."

For a few moments Connor felt as if his heart were disposed to rebel against the ordinances of Providence, as they appeared to be manifested in his own punishment, and the successful villany of Bartle Flanagan. The reflection, however, of a strong and naturally pious mind soon enabled him to perceive the errors into which his passions would lead him, if not restrained and subjected. He made an effort to be calm, and in a considerable degree succeeded.

"Nogher," said he, "let us not forget that this Bartle—this—but I will not say it—let us not forget that God can aisily turn his plans against himself. To God, then, let us lave him. Now, hear me—you must swear in His Presence that you will have neither act nor part in doin' him an injury—that you will not shed his blood nor allow it to be shed by others, as far as you can prevent it."

Nogher rubbed his chin gravely, and almost smiled at what he considered to be a piece of silly nonsense on the part of Connor. He determined, therefore, to satisfy his scruples as well as he could; but, let the consequence be what it might, to evade such an oath.

"Why, Connor," said he, "surely, if you go to that, we can have no ill will against the villain, an as you

don't wish it, we'll dhrop the thing; so now make your mind aisy, for another word you or any one else won't ever hear about it."

"And you won't injure the man?"

"Hut! no," replied Nogher with a gravity whose irony was scarcely perceptible, "what would *we* do for him for, now that *you* don't wish it? I never had any particular wish to see my own funeral."

"And, Nogher, you'll do all you can to prevent him from being murdered?"

"To be sure, Connor—to be sure. By He that made me, we won't give pain to *a single hair of his head*: are you satisfied now?"

"I am" replied the ingenuous young man, who was himself too candid to see through the sophistry of Nogher's oath.

"And now, Nogher," he replied, "many a day have we spent together—you are one of my oldest friends. I suppose this is the last time you will ever see Connor O'Donovan; however don't, man—don't be cast down; you will hear from me, I hope, and hear that I am well too."

He uttered this with a smile which cost him an effort; for on looking into the face of his faithful old friend, he saw its muscles working under the influence of strong feeling—or, I should rather say, deep sorrow—which he felt anxious, by a show of cheerfulness, to remove. The fountains, however, of the old servant's heart were opened, and, after some ineffectual attempts to repress his grief, he fell upon Connor's neck and wept aloud.

"Tut, Nogher," said Connor, "surely it's glad you ought to be, instead of sorry. What would you have done if my first sentence had been acted upon?"

"I'm glad for your sake," replied the other, "but I'm now sorry for my own. You will live, Connor, and you may yet be happy; but he that often held you in his arms—that often played with you, and that next to your father and your mother, you loved better than any

other livin' thing—he, poor Nogher, will never see his boy more.”

On uttering these words, he threw himself again upon Connor's neck, and we are not ashamed to say that their tears flowed together.

“I'll miss you, Connor dear; I'll not see your face at fair or market, nor on the Chapel-green of a Sunday. Your poor father will break his heart, and the mother's eye will never more have an opportunity of being proud out of her son. It's hard upon me to part wid you, Connor, but it can't be helped; I only ax you to remimber Nogher, that, you know, loved you as if you wor his own; remimber me, Connor, of an odd time. I never thought—oh, God, I never thought to see this day. No wondher—oh, no wondher that the fair young crature should be pale and worn, an' sick at heart. I love her now, an' ever will, as well as I did yourself. I'll never see her, Connor, widout thinkin' heavily of him that her heart was set upon, an' that will then be far away from her an' from all that ever loved him.”

“Nogher,” replied Connor, “I'm not without hope that—but this—this is folly. You know I have a right to be thankful to God and the goodness of government for sparin' my life. Now, farewell—it is for ever Nogher, and it is a tryin' word to say; but you know that every one goin' to America must say it; so think that I'm goin' there an' it won't signify.”

“Ah, Connor, I wish I could,” replied Nogher; “but, to tell the truth, what breaks my heart is, to think of the way you are goin' from us. Farewell, then, Connor darlin': an' may the blessin' of God, an' his holy mother, an' of all the saints be upon you, an' guard you now an' for iver. Amin!”

His tears flowed fast, and he sobbed aloud, whilst uttering the last words; he then threw his arms about Connor's neck, and having kissed him, he again wrung his hand, and passed out of the cell, in an agony of grief.

Such is the anomalous nature of that peculiar temperament, which, in Ireland combines within it the extremes of generosity and crime. Here was a man who had been literally affectionate and harmless during his whole past life, yet, who was now actually plotting the murder of a person who had never—except remotely, by his treachery to Connor, whom he loved—rendered him an injury, or given him any cause of offence. And what can show us the anomalous state of moral feeling among a people whose natural impulses are as quick to virtue as to vice, and the reckless estimate which the peasantry form of human life, more clearly than the fact, that Connor, the noble-minded, heroic, and pious peasant, could admire the honest attachment of his old friend, without dwelling upon the dark point in his character, and mingle his tears with a man who was deliberately about to join in, or compass, the assassination of a fellow creature ?

Even against persons of his own class the Irishman thinks that revenge is a duty which he owes to himself ; but against those of a different order it is not only a duty but a virtue—and any man who acts out of this feeling, either as a landlord, a witness, or an agent—for the principle is the same—must expect to meet such retribution as was suggested by a heart like Nogher M'Cormick's, which was otherwise affectionate and honest. In the sacred code of perverted honour by which Irishmen are guided, he is undoubtedly the most heroic and manly, and the most worthy also of imitation, who indulges in, and executes, his vengeance for injuries, whether real or supposed, with the most determined and unshrinking spirit ; but the man who is capable of braving death, by quoting his own innocence as an argument against the justice of the law, is looked upon by the people, as one who is a hero in his rank of life ; and it is unfortunately a kind of ambition among too many of our mistaken but generous countrymen, to propose such men as the best models for imitation,

not only in their lives, but in that hardened hypocrisy which sometimes defies and triumphs over the ordeal of death itself.*

Connor O'Donovan was a happy representation of all that is noble and pious in the Irish character, without one tinge of the crimes which darken or discolour it. But the heart that is full of generosity and fortitude, is generally most susceptible of the kinder and more amiable affections. The noble boy who could hear the sentence of death without the disturbance of a nerve, was forced to weep upon the neck of an old and faithful follower, who loved him, when he remembered that, after that melancholy visit, he would see his familiar face no more. When Nogher left him, a train of painful reflections passed through his mind. He thought of Una, of his father, of his mother, and for some time was more depressed than usual. But the gift of life to the young is ever a counterbalance to every evil that is less than death. In a short time he reflected that the same Providence which had interposed between him and his recorded sentence, had his future fate in its hands; and that he had health, and youth, and strength—and, above all, a good conscience—to bear him through the future vicissitudes of his appointed fate.

* There can be no greater proof of this, than the number of laudatory songs concerning the execution and death of some of the most hardened and notorious of our criminals, which are to be heard among the people.

CHAPTER XV.

DURING the few days that intervened between the last interview which Connor held with Nogher M'Cormick, and the day of his final departure, he felt himself rather relieved than depressed by the number of friends who came to visit him for the last time. He was left less to solitude and himself than he otherwise would have been, and, of course, the days of his imprisonment were neither so dreary nor oppressive as the uninterrupted contemplation of his gloomy destiny would have rendered them. Full of the irrepressible ardour of youth, he longed for that change which he knew must bring him onward in the path of life; and in this how little did he resemble the generality of other convicts, who feel as if time were bringing about the day of their departure with painful and more than ordinary celerity. At length the interviews between him and all those whom he wished to see were concluded, with the exception of three, viz. John O'Brien, and his own parents, whilst only two clear days intervened until the period of his departure.

It was on the third morning previous to that unhappy event, that the brother of his Una—the most active and indefatigable of all those who had interested themselves for him—was announced as requesting an interview. Connor, although prepared for this, experienced on the occasion, as every high-minded person would do, a strong feeling of degradation and shame as the predominant sensation. That, indeed, was but natural, for it is undoubtedly true that we feel disgrace lie more heavily upon us in the eyes of those whom we esteem, than we do under any other circumstances. This impression, however, though as we have said the strongest, was far from being the only one he felt. A

heart like his could not be insensible to the obligations under which the generous and indefatigable exertions of young O'Brien had placed him. But independently of this, he was Una's brother, and the appearance of one so dear to *her*, gave to all his love for her a character of melancholy tenderness, more deep and full than he had probably ever experienced before. Her brother would have been received with extraordinary warmth on his own account, but in addition to that, Connor knew that he now came on behalf of Una herself. It was, therefore, under a tumult of mingled sensations, that he received him in his gloomy apartment—gloomy in despite of all that a humane jailer could do to lessen the rigours of his confinement.

"I cannot welcome you to such a place as this is," said Connor, grasping and wringing his hand, as the other entered, "although I may well say that I would be glad to see you any where, as I am, indeed, to see you even here. I know what I owe you, an' what you have done for me."

"Thank God," replied the other, returning his grasp with equal pressure, "thank God, that, all at events, the worst of what we expected will not—" He paused, for on looking at O'Donovan, he observed upon his open brow a singular depth of melancholy, mingled less with an expression of shame, than with the calm but indignant sorrow of one who could feel no resentment against him with whom he spoke.

O'Brien saw at a glance, that Connor, in consequence of something in his manner, joined to his inconsiderate congratulations, imagined that he believed him guilty. He lost not a moment, therefore, in correcting this mistake.

"It would have been dreadful," he proceeded, "to see innocent blood shed, through the perjury of a villain—for, of course, you cannot suppose for a moment that any one of our family believes you to be guilty."

"I was near doin' you injustice, then," replied the

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other; "but I ought to know that if you did think me so, you wouldn't now be here, nor act as you did. Not but that I thought it possible, on another account you——No," he added, after a pause, "that would be doin' the brother of Una injustice."

"You are right," returned O'Brien, "*no circumstance of any kind*"—and he laid a peculiar emphasis on the words—"no circumstance of *any* kind could bring me to visit a man capable of such a mean and cowardly act; for as to the loss we sustained, I wouldn't think of it. You, Connor O'Donovan, are not the man to commit such an act, either the one way or the other. If I did not *feel* this, you would *not* see me before you." He extended his hand to him while he spoke, and the brow of Connor brightened as he met his grasp.

"I believe you," he replied; "and now I hope we may spake out like men that undherstand one another. In case you hadn't come, I intended to lave a message for you with my mother. I believe you know all Una's secrets."

"I do," replied O'Brien, "just as well as her confessor."

"Yes, I believe that," said Connor. "The sun in heaven is not purer than she is. The only fault she ever could be charged with, was her love for me; and heavily, oh! far too heavily has she suffered for it."

"I for one never blamed her on that account," said her brother. "I knew that her good sense would at any time, have prevented her from forming an attachment to an unworthy object; and upon the strength of her own judgment, I approved of that which she avowed for you. Indeed I perceived it myself before she told me; but upon attempting to gain her secret, the candid creature at once made me her confidant."

"It is like her," said Connor; "she is all truth. Well would it be for her, if she had never seen me. Not even the parting from my father and mother sinks my heart with so much sorrow, as the thought that her

love for me has made her so unhappy. It's a strange case, John O'Brien, an' a trying one; but since it is the will of God, we must submit to it. How did you leave her? I heard she was getting better."

"She is better," said John; "past danger, but still very delicate and feeble. Indeed she is so much worn down, that you would scarcely know her. The brightness of her dark eye is gone, so is her complexion. Sorrow, as she says herself, is in her and upon her. Never, indeed, was a young creature's love so pure and true."

O'Donovan made no reply for some time; but the other observed that he turned away his face from him, as if to conceal his emotion. At length his bosom heaved vehemently three or four times, and his breath came and went with a quick and quivering motion, that betrayed the powerful straggle which he felt.

"I know it is but natural for you to feel deeply," continued her brother, "but as you have borne every thing heretofore with so much firmness, you must not break down now."

"But you know it is a deadly trial to be for ever separated from such a girl. Sufferin' so much, you say—so worn! Her dark eye dim with——oh, it is—it is a deadly trial—a heart-breaking trial! John O'Brien," he proceeded, with uncommon earnestness, "you are her only brother, an' she is your only sister. Oh, will you, for the sake of God, and for my sake, if I may take the liberty of sayin' so—but, above all things, will you, for her own sake, when I am gone, comfort and support her, an' raise her heart, if possible, out of this heavy throuble?"

Her brother gazed on him with a melancholy smile, in which might be read both admiration and sympathy.

"Do you think it possible that I would, or could omit to cherish and sustain poor Una, under such trying circumstances? Every thing considered, however, your words are only natural—only natural."

"Don't let her think too much about it," continued O'Donovan. "Bring her out as much as you can—let her not be much by herself. But this is folly in me," he added, "you know yourself better than I can instruct you how to act."

"God knows," replied the brother, struck and softened by the mournful anxiety for her welfare which Connor expressed, "God knows, that all you say, and all you can think of besides, shall be done for our dear girl—so make your mind easy."

"I thank you," replied the other; "from my soul an' from the bottom of my heart I thank you. Endeavour to make her forget me, if you can; an' when this passes away out of her mind, she may yet be happy—a happy wife an' a happy mother—an' she can then think of her love for Connor O'Donovan, only as a troubled drame that she had in her early life."

"Connor," said the other, "this is not right—you must be firmer;" but as he uttered the words of reproof, the tears almost came to his eyes.

"As for my part," continued Connor, "what is the world to me, now that I've lost her? It is—it is a hard an' a dark fate, but why it should fall upon us I do not know. It's as much as I can do to bear it as I ought."

"Well, well," replied John, "don't dwell too much on it. I have something else to speak to you about."

"Dwell on it!" returned the other; "as God is above me, she's not one minute out of my thoughts; an' I tell you, I'd rather be dead this moment, than forget her. Her mimory now is the only happiness that is left to me—my only wealth in this world."

"No," said John, "it is not. Connor, I have now a few words to say to you, and I know they will prove whether you are as generous as you are said to be; and whether your love for my sister is truly tender and disinterested. You have it now in your power to ease her heart very much of a heavy load of concern which

she feels on your account. Your father, you know, is now a ruined man, or I should rather say a poor one. You are going out under circumstances the most painful. In the country to which you are unhappily destined, you will have no friends—and no one living feels this more acutely than Una; for observe me, I am now speaking on her behalf, and acting in her name. I am her agent. Now Una is richer than you might imagine, being the possessor of a legacy left her by our grandfather by my father's side. Of this legacy she herself stands in no need—but you may and will, when you reach a distant country. Now, Connor, you see how that admirable creature loves you—you see how that love would follow you to the uttermost ends of the earth. Will you, or rather are you, capable of being as generous as she is?—and can you show her that you are as much above the absurd prejudices of the world and its cold forms as he ought to be who is loved by a creature so truly generous and delicate as Una! You know how very poorly she is at present in health; and I tell you candidly, that your declining to accept this as a gift and memorial by which to remember her, may be attended with very serious consequences to that health."

Connor kept his eyes fixed upon the speaker with a look of deep and earnest attention; and as O'Brien detailed with singular address and delicacy these striking proofs of Una's affection, her lover's countenance became an index of the truth with which his heart corresponded to the admirable girl's tenderness and generosity. He seized O'Brien's hand—

"John," said he, "you are worthy of bein' Una's brother, and I could say nothing higher in your favour; but in the mane time, you and she both know that I want nothing to enable me to remember her by. This is a proof, I grant you, that she loves me truly; but I knew *that* as well before, as I do now. In this business I cannot comply with her wish an' yours, an' you musn't press me. *You* I say musn't press me. Through my

whole life I have never lost my own good opinion, but if I did what you want me now to do, I couldn't respect myself—I would feel lowered in my own mind. In short, I'd feel unhappy, an' that I was too mane to be worthy of your sister. Once for all, then, I cannot comply in this business with your wish an' her's."

"But the anxiety produced by your refusal may have very dangerous effects on her health."

"Then you must contrive somehow to console my refusal from her, till she gets recovered. I couldn't do what you want me, an' if you press me farther upon it, I'll think you don't respect me as much as I'd wish *her* brother to do. Oh, God of heaven!" he exclaimed, clasping his hands, "must I love you, my darling Una, for ever? I must, I must; an' the dhrame of all we hoped is past—but never, never, will she be out of my heart. Her eye dim, an' her cheek pale! an' all for me—for a man covered with shame and disgrace; Oh, John, John, what a heart!—to love me in spite of all this, an' in spite of the world's opinion along with it!"

At this moment one of the turnkeys entered, and told him that his mother and a young lady were coming up to see him.

"My mother," he exclaimed, "I am glad she is come; but I didn't expect her till the day after to-morrow. A young lady! Heaven's above, what young lady could come with my mother?"

He involuntarily exchanged looks with O'Brien, and a thought flashed on the instant across the mind of both. They immediately understood each other.

"Undoubtedly," said John, "it can be no other—it is she—it is Una. Good God; how is this! The interview and separation will be more than she can bear—she will sink under it."

Connor made no reply, but sat down and pressed his right hand upon his forehead, as if to collect energy sufficient to meet the double trial which was now before him.

"I have only one coorse, John," said he, "now; and that is, to appear to be—what I am not—a firm-hearted man. I must try to put on a smiling face before them."

"If it be Una," returned the other, "I shall withdraw for a while. I know her extreme bashfulness in many cases: and I know, too, that any thing like a restraint upon her heart at present——In a word, I shall retire for a little."

"It may be as well," said Connor; "but so far as I am concerned, it makes no difference—just as you think proper."

"Your mother will be a sufficient witness," said the delicate-minded brother; "but I will see you again after they shall have left you."

"You must," replied O'Donovan. "Oh see me—see me again! I have something to say to you of more value even than Una's life."

The door then opened, and assisted, or rather supported by the governor of the jail, and one of the turnkeys, Honor O'Donovan, and Una O'Brien entered the cell together.

The situation in which O'Donovan was now placed, will be admitted, we think, by the reader, to have been one equally unprecedented and distressing. It has often been said, and on many occasions with perfect truth, that opposite states of feeling existing in the same breast generally neutralize each other. In Connor's heart, however, there was in this instance nothing of a conflicting nature. The young man's love for such a mother, bore in its melancholy beauty a touching resemblance to the purity of his affection for Una O'Brien—each exhibiting in its highest character those virtues which made the heart of the mother proud and loving, and that of his beautiful girl generous and devoted. So far, therefore, from their appearance together tending to concentrate his moral fortitude, it actually divided his strength, and forced him to meet each with a heart subdued and softened by his love for the other.

As they entered, therefore, he approached them, smiling as well as he could; and first taking a hand of each, would have led them over to a deal form beside the fire but it was soon evident, that owing to their weakness and agitation united, they required greater support. He and O'Brien accordingly helped them to a seat, on which they sat with every symptom of that exhaustion which results at once from illness and mental suffering.

Let us not forget to inform our readers that the day of this sorrowful visit was that on which, according to his original sentence, he should have yielded up his life as a penalty to the law.

"My dear mother," said he, "you an' Una know that this day ought not to be a day of sorrow among us. Only for the goodness of my friends, an' of government, it's not my voice you'd be now listenin' to—but that is now changed—so no more about it. I'm glad to see you both able to come out."

His mother, on first sitting down, clasped her hands together, and in a silent ejaculation, with closed eyes, raised her heart to the Almighty, to supplicate aid and strength to enable her to part finally with that boy who was, and ever had been, dearer to her than her own heart. Una trembled, and on meeting her brother so unexpectedly, blushed deeply, and, indeed, appeared to breathe with difficulty. She held a bottle of smelling salts in her hand.

"John," she said, "I will explain this visit."

"My dear Una," he replied affectionately, "you need not—it requires no explanation—and I beg you will not think of it one moment more. I must now leave you together for about half an hour, as I have some business to do in town that will detain me about that time." He then left them.

"Connor," said his mother, "sit down between this darlin' girl an' me, till I spake to you."

He sat down and took a hand of each.

‘A darlin’ girl she is, mother. It’s now I see how very ill you have been, my own Una.’

“Yes,” she replied, “I was ill—but when I heard that your life was spared, I got better.”

This she said with an artless but melancholy *naivete*, that was very trying to the fortitude of her lover. As she spoke she looked fondly but mournfully into his face.

“Connor,” proceeded his mother, “I hope you are fully sensible of the mercy that God has shown you, under this great thrial?”

“I hope I am, indeed, my dear mother. It is to God I surely owe it.”

“It is, an’ I trust that go where you will, and live where you may, the day will never come when you’ll forget the debt you owe the Almighty, for preventin’ you from bein’ cut down into the grave in the very bloom of your life. I hope, avillish machree, that that day will never come.”

“God forbid it ever should, mother dear.”

“Thin you may larn from what has happened, *avick agus asthore*,* never, oh never to despair of God’s mercy; no matther into what thrial or difficulty you may be brought. You see whin you nayther hoped for it here, nor expected it, how it came for all that.”

“It did, blessed be God!”

“You’re goin’ now, ahagur, to a sthrange land, where you’ll meet—ay, where my darlin’ boy will meet the worst of company; but remember, *allana villish*, that your mother, well as she loves you, an’ well I own, as you deserve to be loved—that mother that hung over the cradle of her only one—that dressed him, an’ reared him, an’ felt many a proud heart out of him—that mother would sooner at any time see him in his grave, his soul bein’ free from stain, than to know that his heart was corrupted by the world, an’ the people you’ll meet in it.”

* My son and my darling.

q 2

Something in the last sentence must have touched a chord in Una's heart, for the tears, without her showing any other external signs of emotion, streamed down her cheeks.

"My advice thin to you—an' oh, *avick machree, machree*, it is my last, the last you will ever hear from my lips—"

"Oh, mother, mother," exclaimed Connor, but he could not proceed—voice was denied him. Una here sobbed aloud.

"You bore your thrial well, my darlin' son—you must thin bear this as well ; an' you, a colleen dhas, remember your promise to me afore I consinted to come with you this day."

The weeping girl here dried her eyes, and by a strong effort hushed her grief.

"My advice, thin, to you, is never to neglect your duty to God, for if you do it wanst or twist, you'll begin by degrees to get careless—then, bit by bit, asthore, your heart will harden, your conscience will lave you, an' wickedness, an' sin, an' guilt, will come upon you. It's no matther, asthore, how much wicked comrades may laugh an' jeer at you, keep you thrue to the will of your good God, an' to your religious duties, an' let *them* take their own coorse. Will you promise me to do this, *asuillish machree?*"*

"Mother, I have always sthrove to do it, and with God's assistance, always will."

"An' my son, too, will bear up undher this like a man. Remember, Connor darlin', that although you're lavin' us for ever, yet your poor father an' I have the blessed satisfaction of knowin' that we're not childless ; that you're alive, an' that you may yet do well an' be happy. I mention these things, *acushla machree*, to show you that there's nothin' over you so bad but you may show yourself firm an' manly undher it ; act as

* Light of my heart.

you have done. It's you, ashore, ought to comfort your father an' me; an' I hope whin you're partin' from him, that you'll——Oh God support him! I wish, Connor darlin', that that partin' was over, but I depend upon you to make it as light upon him as you can."

She paused, apparently from exhaustion. Indeed it was evident, either that she had little else to add, or that she felt too weak to speak much more, with such a load of sorrow and affliction on her heart.

"There is one thing, Connor jewel, that I needn't mention. Of coorse you'll write to us as often as you conveniently can. Oh, do not forget that, for you know that that bit of paper from your own hand, is all belongin' to you we will ever see more. *Avick machree, machree*, many a long look out we will have for it. It may keep the ould man's heart from breakin'."

She was silent, but as she uttered the last words, there was a shaking of the voice that gave clear proof of the difficulty with which she went through the solemn task of being calm—a difficulty which, for the sake of her son, she had heroically imposed upon herself.

She was now silent, but as is usual with Irishwomen when under the influence of sorrow, she rocked herself involuntarily to and fro, whilst, with closed eyes, hands clasped as before, she held communion with God, the only true source of comfort.

"Connor," she added after a pause, during which he and Una, though silent from respect to her, were both deeply affected; "sit fornint me, *avick machree*, that, for the short time you're to be with me, I may have you before my eyes. Husth, now, a colleep *machree*, an' remimber your promise. Where's the stringth you said you'd show?"

She then gazed with a long look of love and sorrow upon the fine countenance of her manly son, and nature would be no longer restrained—

"Let me lay my head upon your breast," said she,

"I'm attemptin' too much; the mother's heart will give out the mother's voice—will speak the mother's sorrow! Oh, my son, my son, my darlin' manly son, are you lavin' your lovin' mother for evermore, for evermore?"

She was overcome; placing her head upon his bosom, her grief fell into that beautiful but mournful wail, with which, in Ireland, those of her sex express the profoundest sense of affliction.

Indeed, the scene assumed a tenderness, from this incident, which was inexpressibly affecting; inasmuch as her cry, so like that of death, was but little out of place when bewailing that beloved son whom, by the stern decree of law, she was never to see again.

Connor kissed her pale cheek and lips, and rained down a flood of bitter tears upon her face; and Una, borne away by the enthusiasm of her sorrow, threw her arms also around her, and wept aloud.

At length having in some degree eased her heart, she sat up, and with that consideration and good sense for which she had ever been remarkable, said—

"Nature must have its way; an' surely, within reason, it's not sinful, seein' that God himself has given us the feelins of sorrow, whin thim that we love is lavin' us—lavin' us, never, never to see them agin. It's only nature, afther all; and now, ma colleen dhas—"

Her allusion to the final separation of those we love—or, in her own words, "to the feelins of sorrow, whin thim we love is lavin' us"—was too much for the heart and affections of the gentle girl at her side, whose grief now passed all the bounds which her previous attempts at being firm had prescribed to it.

O'Donovan took the beloved one in his arms, and, in the long embrace which ensued, seldom were love and sorrow so singularly and mournfully blended.

"I don't want to prevent you from cryin', a colleen machree; for I know it will lighten an' aise your heart," said Honor; "but remimber your wakeness,

and your poor health; an' Connor, avourneen, don't you—if you love her—don't forget the state her health's in either."

"Mother, mother, you know its the last time I'll ever look upon my Una's face again," he exclaimed. "Oh well may I be loath an' unwillin' to part with her! You'll think of me, my darlin' life, when I'm gone—not as a guilty man, Una dear, but as one that if he ever committed a crime, it was lovin' you, an' bringin' you to this unhappy state."

"God sees my heart this day," she replied—and she spoke with difficulty—"that I could and would have travelled over the world; borne joy and sorrow, hardship and distress—good fortune and bad—all happily, if you had been by my side—if you had not been taken from me. Oh, Connor, Connor, you may well pity your Una—for your's I am and was—another's I will never be. You are entering into scenes that will relieve you by their novelty—that will force you to think of other things and of other persons than those you've left behind you; but I—oh, what can I look upon that will not fill my heart with despair and sorrow, by reminding me of you and of our affection?"

"*Fareer gair*," exclaimed the mother, speaking involuntarily aloud, and interrupting her own words with sobs of bitter anguish—"*Fareer gair, ma colleen dhas*, but that's the heavy thruth with us all. Oh, the ould man's heart will break all out, when he looks upon the place, an' every thing else that our boy left behind him."

"Dear Una," said Connor, "you know that we're partin' now for ever."

"My breaking heart tells me that," she replied. "I would give the wealth of the world that it was not so—I would—I would."

"Listen to me, my own life. You must not let your love for me lie so heavy upon your heart. Go out, and keep your mind employed upon other thoughts—

by degrees you'll forget—no, I don't think you could altogether forget me—me—the first, Una, you ever loved."

"And the last, Connor—the last I ever will love."

"No, no. In the presence of my lovin' mother, I say that you must not think that way. Time will pass, my own Una, an' you will yet be happy with some other. You're very young; an', as I said, time will wean me by degrees out of your mimory."

Una broke hastily from his embrace, for she lay upon his breast all this time.

"Do you think so, Connor O'Donovan," she exclaimed, standing apart from him; but on looking into his face, and reading the history of deep-seated sorrow which appeared there so legible, she again "fled to him and wept."

"Oh, no," she continued, "I cannot quarrel with you now; but you do the heart of your *own* Una injustice, if you think it could ever feel happiness with another. Already I have my mother's consent to enter a convent—and to enter a convent—is my fixed determination."

"Oh, mother" said Connor, "how will I love this blessed girl? how will I part with her?"

Honor rose up, and, by two or three simple words, disclosed more forcibly, more touchingly, than any direct exhibition of grief could have done, the inexpressible power of the misery she felt at this eternal separation from her only boy. She seized Una's two hands, and kissing her lips, said, in tones of the most heart-rending pathos—

"Oh, Una, Una, pity me—I am his *mother*!"

Una threw herself into her arms, and sobbed out—

"Yes, and mine."

"Thin you'll obay me as a daughter should," said Honor. "This is too much for you, Oona; part we both must from him, an' neither of us is able to bear much more."

She here gave Connor a private signal to be firm, pointing unobservedly to Una's pale cheek, which at the moment lay upon her bosom.

"Connor," she proceeded, "Oona has the lock you sent her. Nogher gave it to me; an' my daughter, for I will always call her so, has it at this minute next her lovin' heart. Here is her's, an' let it lie next your's."

Connor seized the glossy ringlet from his mother's hands, and placed it at that moment next the seat of his undying affection for the devoted creature from whose ebon locks it had been taken.

His mother then kissed Una again, and, rising up, said—

"Now, my daughter, remimber I am your mother, an' obay me."

"I will," said Una, attempting to repress her grief—
"I will; but——"

"Yis, darlin', you will. Now Connor, my son, my son—Connor?"

"What is it, mother darlin'?"

"We're goin', Connor—we're lavin' you; be firm—be a man. Aren't you my son, Connor?—my only son, an' the ould man—an' never, never more—oh!—kneel down—kneel down till I bless you! Oh, many, many a blessin' has risen from your mother's lips an' your mother's heart to heaven for you, my son, my son!"

Connor knelt, his heart bursting; but he knelt not alone. By his side was his own Una, with meek and bended head, awaiting for *her mother's* blessing.

She then poured forth that blessing: first upon him who was nearest to her heart, and afterwards upon the worn, but still beautiful girl, whose love for that adored son had made her so inexpressibly dear to her. Whilst uttering this fervent but sorrowful benediction, she placed a hand upon the head of each, after which she stooped and kissed them both, but without shedding a single tear.

"Now," said she, "comes the mother's weakness—but my son will help me by his manliness—so will my daughter. I am very weak. Oh, what heart can know the sufferings of this hour, but mine? My son, my son,—Connor O'Donovan, my son!"

At this moment John O'Brien entered the room; but the solemnity and pathos of her manner and voice hushed him so completely into silent attention, that it is probable she did not perceive him.

"Let me put my arms about him and kiss his lips once more, and then I'll say farewell."

She again approached Connor, who opened his arms to receive her, and after having kissed him and looked into his face, said, "I will now go—I will now go;" but instead of withdrawing as she had intended, it was observed that she pressed him more closely to her heart than before; plied her hands about his neck and bosom, as if she were not actually conscious of what she did; and at length sunk into the forgetfulness of all her piercing misery upon his breast.

"Now," said Una, rising into a spirit of unexpected fortitude, "now, Connor, I *will* be her daughter, and you must be her son. The moment she recovers we must separate, and in such a manner as to show that our affection for each other shall not be injurious to her."

"It is nature only," said her brother; "or, in other words, the love that is natural to such a mother for such a son that has overcome her. Connor, this must be ended."

"I am willin' it should;" replied the other. "You must assist them home, and let me see you again to-morrow. I have something of the deepest importance to say to you."

Una's bottle of smelling salts soon relieved the woe-worn mother; and, ere the lapse of many minutes, she was able to summon her own natural firmness of character. The lovers, too, strove to be firm; and, after one

long and last embrace, they separated from Connor with more composure than, from the preceding scene, might have been expected.

The next day, according to promise, John O'Brien paid him an early visit, in order to hear what Connor had assured him was of more importance even than Una's life itself. Their conference was long and serious, for each felt equally interested in its subject matter. When it was concluded, and they had separated, O'Brien's friends observed that he appeared like a man whose mind was occupied by something that occasioned him to feel deep anxiety. What the cause of this secret care was, he did not disclose to any one except his father, to whom, in a few days afterwards, he mentioned it. His college vacation had now nearly expired; but it was naturally agreed upon, in the course of the communication he then made, that for the present he should remain with them at home, and postpone his return to Maynooth, if not abandon the notion of the Priesthood altogether. When the Bodagh left his son, after this dialogue, his open, good-humoured countenance seemed clouded, his brow thoughtful, and his whole manner that of a man who has heard something more than usually unpleasant; but whatever this intelligence was, he too, appeared equally studious to conceal it.

The day now arrived on which Connor O'Donovan was to see his other parent for the last time, and this interview he dreaded, on the old man's account, more than he had done even the separation from his mother. Our readers may judge, therefore, of his surprise on finding that his father exhibited a want of sorrow or of common feeling that absolutely amounted almost to indifference.

Connor felt it difficult to account for a change so singular and extraordinary in one with whose affection for himself he was so well acquainted. A little time, however, and an odd hint or two thrown out in the early part of their conversation, soon enabled him to

perceive, either that he laboured under some strange hallucination, or had discovered a secret source of comfort known only to himself. At length it appeared to the son that he had discovered the cause of this unaccountable change in the conduct of his father ; and, we need scarcely assure our readers, that his heart sank into new and deeper distress at the words from which he drew the inference.

"Connor," said the miser, "I had great luck yestherday. You remimber Antony Cusack, that ran away from me wid seventy-three pounds fifteen shillins an' nine pence, now better than nine years ago. Many a curse he had from me for his roguery ; but, somehow, it seems he only *thruv* under them. His son Andy called on me yestherday mornin', and *ped* me to the last farden, inth'rest an' all. Wasn't I in luck?"

"It was very fortunate, father, an' I'm glad of it."

"It was, indeed, the hoighth o' luck. Now, Connor, you think one thing, an' that is, that we're partin' for ever, and that we'll never see one another till we meet in the next world. Isn't that what you think? Eh, Connor?"

"It's hard to tell what may happen, father. We may see one another even in this ; stranger things have been brought about."

"I tell you, Connor, we'll meet agin ; I have made a plan out of my own head for that ; but the luckiest of all was the money yesterday."

"What is the plan, father?"

"Don't ax me, avick, bekase it's betther for you not to know it. I may be disappointed, but it's not likely aither ; still it 'ud be risin' expectations in you, an' if it didn't come to pass, you'd only be more unhappy ; an' you know, Connor darlin', I wouldn't wish to be the manes of making your póor heart sore for one minute. God knows the same young heart has suffered enough, an' more than it ought to suffer.—Connor?"

"Well, father?"

"Keep up your spirits, darlin'; don't be at all cast down, I tell you."

The old man caught his son's hands ere he spoke, and uttered these words with a voice of such tenderness and affection, that Connor, on seeing him assume the office of comforter, contrary to all he had expected, felt himself more deeply affected than if his father had fallen, as was his wont, into all the impotent violence of grief.

"It was only comin' here to-day, Connor, that I thought of this plan; but I wish to goodness your poor mother knew it, for thin maybe she'd let me mention it to you."

"If it would make me any way unhappy," replied Connor, fearing it might be some sordid project, "I'd rather not hear it; only whatever it is, father, if it's against my dear mother's wishes, don't put it in practice."

"I couldn't, Connor, widout her consent, barrin' we'd—but there's no use in that; only keep up your spirits, Connor dear. Still I'm glad it came into my head, this plan; for if I thought that I'd never see you agin, I wouldn't know how to part wid you; my heart 'ud fairly break, or my head 'ud get light. Now, won't you promise me not to fret, acushla machree? an' to keep your heart up, an' your spirits?"

"I'll fret as little as I can, father. You know there's not much pleasure in frettin', an' that no one would fret if they could avoid it; but will you promise me, my dear father, to be guided an' advised in whatever you do, or intend to do, by my mother—by my blessed mother?"

"I will—I will, Connor; an' if I had always done so, maybe it isn't here now you'd be standin', an' my heart breakin' to look at you; but, indeed, it was God, I hope, put this plan into my head; an' the money yestherday—that, too, was so lucky—far more so, Connor dear, than you think. Only for that—but shure no matther, Connor, we're not partin' for evermore now; so, acushla

machree, let your mind be aisy. Cheer up, cheer up, my darlin' son."

Much more conversion of this kind took place between them during the old man's stay, which he prolonged almost to the last hour. Connor wondered, as was but natural, what the plan so recently fallen upon by his father could be. Indeed, sometimes he feared that the idea of their separation had shaken his intellect, and that his allusions to this mysterious discovery, mixed up, as they were, with the uncommon delight he expressed at having recovered Cusack's money, boded nothing less than the ultimate derangement of his faculties. One thing, however, seemed obvious—that, whatever it might be, whether reasonable or otherwise, his father's mind was exclusively occupied by it; and that, during the whole scene of their parting, it sustained him in a manner for which he felt it utterly impossible to account. It is true he did not leave him without shedding tears, and bitter tears; but they were unaccompanied by the wild vehemence of grief which had, on former occasions, raged through and almost desolated his heart. The reader may entertain some notion of what he would have felt on this occasion, were it not for the "plan" as he called it, which supported him so much, when we tell him that he blessed his son three or four times during their interview, without being conscious that he had blessed him more than once. His last words to him were to keep up his spirits for that there was little doubt but they would meet again.

The next morning, at day-break, "their noble boy," as they fondly and proudly called him, was conveyed to the transport, in company with many others; and, at the hour of five o'clock, P.M. that melancholy vessel weighed anchor, and spread her broad sails to the bosom of the ocean.

Although the necessary affairs of life are, after all, the great assuagers of sorrow, yet there are also cases where the heart persists in rejecting the consolation

brought by time, and in clinging to the memory of that which it loved. Neither Honor O'Donovan nor Una O'Brien could forget our unhappy hero, nor school their affections into the apathy of ordinary feelings. Of Fordorougha we might say the same; for although he probably felt the want of his son's presence more keenly even than his wife, yet his grief notwithstanding its severity, was mingled with the interruption of a habit, such as is frequently the prevailing cause of sorrow in selfish and contracted minds. That there was much selfishness in his grief, our readers, we dare say, will admit. At all events, a scene which took place between him and his wife, on the night of the day which saw Connor depart from his native land for ever, will satisfy them of the different spirit which marked their feelings on that unfortunate occasion.

Honor had, as might be expected, recovered her serious composure, and spent a great portion of that day in offering up her prayers for the welfare of their son. Indeed much of her secret grief was checked by the alarm which she felt for her husband, whose conduct on that morning before he left home was marked by the wild excitement which of late had been so peculiar to him. Her surprise was consequently great when she observed on his return, that he manifested a degree of calmness, if not serenity, utterly at variance with the outrage of his grief, or we should rather say, the delirium of his despair, in the early part of the day. She resolved, however, with her usual discretion, not to catechise him on the subject, least his violence might revive, but to let his conduct explain itself, which she knew in a little time it would do. Nor was she mistaken. Scarcely had an hour elapsed, when with something like exultation, he disclosed his plan, and asked her advice and opinion. She heard it attentively, and for the first time since the commencement of their affliction, did the mother's brow seem unburthened of the sorrow which sat upon it, and her

eye to gleam with something like the light of expected happiness. It was however, on their retiring to rest that night that the affecting contest took place, which exhibited so strongly the contrast between their characters. We mentioned in a preceding part of this narrative, that ever since her son's incarceration Honor had slept in his bed, and with her head on the very pillow which his had so often pressed. As she was about to retire, Fardoroughia, for a moment, appeared to forget his "plan," and every thing but the departure of his son. He followed Honor to his bedroom, which he traversed, distractedly clasping his hands, kissing his boy's clothes, and uttering sentiments of extreme misery and despair.

"There's his bed," he exclaimed; "there's our boy's bed—but where is he himself?—gone, gone for ever! There's his clothes, our darlin' son's clothes; look at them. Oh God, oh God! my heart will break outright. Oh, Connor, our boy, are you gone from us for ever! We must sit down to our breakfast in the mornin', to our dinner, and to our supper at night, but our noble boy's face we'll never see—his voice we'll never hear."

"Ah, Fardoroughia, it's thrue, it's thrue," replied the wife; "but remimber he's not in the grave, not in the clay of the church-yard; we haven't seen him carried there, an' laid down undher the heart-breakin' sound of the dead-bell; we haven't hard the cowl'd noise of the clay fallin' in upon his coffin. Oh no, no—thanks, everlastin' thanks to the God that has spared our boy's life! How often have you an' I hard people say over the corpses of their childre, 'Oh, if he was only alive, I didn't care in what part of the world it was, or if I was never to see his face again, only that he was livin'!' An' wouldn't they, Fardoroughia dear, give the world's wealth to have their wishes? Oh they would, they would—an' thanks' for ever be to the Almighty! our boy is livin' and may yet be happy."

Fardorougha, let us not fly in the face of God, who has in his mercy spared our son."

"I'll sleep in his bed," replied the husband; "on the very spot he lay on I'll lie."

This was indeed trenching, and selfishly trenching upon the last sad privilege of the mother's heart. Her sleeping here was one of those secret but melancholy enjoyments, which the love of a mother or of a wife will often steal, like a miser's theft, from the very hoard of their own sorrows. In fact, she was not prepared for this, and when he spoke she looked at him for some time in silent amazement.

"Oh no, Fardorougha dear—the mother, the mother, that her breast was so often his pillow, has the best right, now that he's gone, to lay her head where his lay. Oh, for heaven's sake, lave that poor pleasure to me, Fardorougha."

"No, Honor, *you* can bear up under grief better than *I* can. I *must* sleep where my boy slept."

"Fardorougha, I could go upon my knees to you, an' I will, avourneen, if you'll grant me *this*."

"I can't, I can't," he replied, distractedly; "I could sleep no where else. I love every thing belongin' to him. I can't, Honor, I can't, I can't."

"Fardorougha, my heart—his mother's heart is fixed upon it, an' was. Oh lave this to me, acushla, lave this to me—it's all I axe."

"I couldn't, I couldn't—my heart is breakin'—it'll be sweet to me—I'll think I'll be nearer him,"—and as he uttered these words the tears flowed copiously down his cheeks.

His affectionate wife was touched with compassion, and immediately resolved to let him have his way, whatever it might cost herself.

"God pity you," she said; "I'll give it up, I'll give it up, Fardorougha. Do, sleep where he slept; I can't blame you, nor I don't; for sure it's only a proof of how much you love him." She then bade him good

night, and, with spirits dreadfully weighed down by this singular incident, withdrew to her lonely pillow; for Connor's bed had been a single one, in which of course two persons could not sleep together. Thus did these bereaved parents retire to seek that rest which nothing but exhausted nature seemed disposed to give them, until at length they fell asleep under the double shadow of night and a calamity which filled their hearts with so much distress and misery.

In the mean time, whatever these two families might have felt for the sufferings of their respective children in consequence of Bartle Flanagan's villany, that plausible traitor had watched the departure of his victim with a palpitating anxiety almost equal to what some unhappy culprit, in the dock of a prison, would experience when the foreman of his jury hands down the sentence which is either to hang or acquit him. Up to the very moment on which the vessel sailed, his cruel but cowardly heart was literally sick with the apprehension that Connor's mitigated sentence might be still futher commuted to a term of imprisonment. Great, therefore, was his joy, and boundless his exultation, on satisfying himself that he was now perfectly safe in the crime he had committed, and that his path was never to be crossed by him, whom, of all men living, he had most feared and hated. The reader is not to suppose, however, that by the ruin of Connor, and the revenge he consequently had gained upon Fardorougha, the scope of his dark designs was by any means accomplished. Far from it; the fact is, his measures were only in a progressive state. In Nogher M'Cormick's last interview with Connor, our readers will please to remember that a hint had been thrown out by that attached old follower, of Flanagan's entertaining certain guilty purposes involving nothing less than the abduction of Una. Now in justice to Flanagan's sagacity we are bound to say that no one living had ever received from himself any intimation of such an intention. The

whole story was fabricated by Nogher for the purpose of getting Connor's consent to the vengeance which it had been determined to execute upon his enemy. By a curious coincidence, however, the story, though decidedly false so far as Nogher knew to the contrary, happened to be literally and absolutely true. Flanagan, indeed, was too skilful and secret, either to precipitate his own designs until the feelings of the parties should abate and settle down, or to place himself at the mercy of another person's discretion. He knew his own heart too well to risk his life by such dangerous and unseasonable confidence. Some months consequently had passed away since Connor's departure, when an event took place which gave him still further security. This was nothing less than the fulfilment by Fardorougha of that plan to which he looked forward with such prospective satisfaction. Connor had not been a month gone when his father began to dispose of his property, which he soon did, having sold out his farm to good advantage. He then paid his rent, the only debt he owed; and having taken a passage to New South Wales for himself and Honor, they departed with melancholy satisfaction to seek that son without whose society they found their desolate hearth gloomier than the cell of a prison.

This was followed, too, by another circumstance—but one apparently of little importance—which was the removal of Biddy Nulty to the Bodagh's family, through the interference of Una, by whom she was treated with singular affection, and admitted to her confidence.

Such was the position of the parties after a lapse of five months subsequent to the transportation of Connor. Flanagan had conducted himself with great circumspection, and, so far as public observation could go, with much propriety. There was no change whatsoever perceptible, either in his dress or manner, except that alluded to by Nogher of his altogether declining to taste any intoxicating liquid. In truth, so well did he

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act his part, that the obloquy raised against him at the period of Connor's trial was nearly, if not altogether, removed, and many persons once more adopted an impression of his victim's guilt.

With respect to the Bodagh and his son, the anxiety which we have described them as feeling in consequence of the latter's interview with O'Donovan, was now completely removed. Una's mother had nearly forgotten both the crime and its consequences; but upon the spirits of her daughter there appeared to rest a silent and a settled sorrow, not likely to be diminished or removed. Her cheerfulness had abandoned her, and many an hour did she contrive to spend with Biddy Nulty, engaged in the mournful satisfaction of talking over all that affection prompted of her banished lover.

CHAPTER XVI.

WE must beg our readers to accompany us to a scene of a different description from any we have yet drawn. The night of a November day had set in, or rather advanced so far as nine o'clock, when, towards the angle of a small three-corned field, called by a peculiar coincidence of name, Oona's Handkerchief, in consequence of an old legend connected with it, might be seen moving a number of straggling figures, sometimes in groups of fours and fives; sometimes in twos or threes, as the case might be, and not unfrequently did a single straggler advance, and after a few private words, either join the others or proceed alone to a house situated in the angular corner of the field to which we allude. As the district was a remote one, and the night rather dark, several shots might be heard as they proceeded, and several flashes in the pan seen from the rusty arms of those who were probably anxious to pull a trigger for the first time. The country, at the period we write of, be it observed, was in a state of comparative tranquillity, and no such thing as a police corps had been heard of or known in the neighbourhood.

At the lower end of a long, level stretch of moor, called the Black Park, two figures approached a kind of gate or pass that opened into it. One of them stood until the other advanced, and in a significant tone asked, who comes there?

"A friend to the guard," was the reply.

"Good morrow," said the other.

"Good morrow mornin' to you."

"What age are you in?"

"In the end of the Fifth."*

* These were passwords of Ribbonism, and are taken from the chronological arrangement of the seven ages of the Christian Church, as adapted by the writer of Pastorini.

"All right; come on, boy; the thrue blood's in you, whoever you are."

"An' is it possible you don't know me, Dandy?"

"Faix is it; I forgot my spectacles to-night. Who the dickens are you at all?"

"I suppose you purtind to forget Ned M'Cormick?"

"Is it Nogher's son?"

"The divil a other; an' Dandy Duffy, how are you, man alive?"

"Why you see, Ned, I've been so long out of the country, an' I'm now so short a time back, that upon my sowl I forget a great many of my ould acquaintances, especially them that wor only slips when I *wint acrass*.* Faith I'm purty well considherin', Ned, I thank you."

"Bad luck to thim that sint you acrass, Dandy; not but that you got off purty well on the whole, by all accounts. They say only that Rousin Redhead swore like a man you'd 'a' got a touch of the *Shuggy Shoe*."†

"To the divil wid it all now, Ned; let us have no more about it; I don't for my own part like to think of it. Have you any notion of what we're called upon for to-night?"

"Divil the laste; but I believe, Dandy, that Bartle's not the white-headed boy wid *you* no more nor wid some more of us."

"Him! a double distilled villain. Faith they wor never good that had the white liver; an' he has it to the back bone. My brother Lachlin, that's now dead, God rest him, often tould me about the way he thricked him and Barney Bradly when they war green horns, about sixteen or seventeen. He got them to join him in stalin' a sheep for their Christmas dinner, he said; so they all three stole it; an' the blaggard skinned and cut it up, sendin' my poor *bocaun*‡ of a brother home to hide the

* In other words, when he was transported.

† Gallows.

‡ A soft, silly fellow.

skin in the sthraw in our barn, and poor Barney, wid only the head an' trotthers, to hide them in his father's cow-house. Very good; in a day or two the neighbours wor all called upon to clear themselves upon the holy Evangelisk; and the two first that he egg'd an to do it was my brother an' Barney. Of coorse he 'switched the primmer'* himself that he was innocent; but whin it was all over *some one* sint Jarmy Campel, that lost the sheep, to the very spot where they hid the fleece an' trotthers. Jarmy didn't wish to say much about it; so he tould them if they'd fairly acknowledge it, an' pay him betune them for the sheep, he'd dhrop it. My father an' Andy Bradly did so, an' there it ended; but purshue the morsel of the mutton ever they tasted in the mane time. As for Bartle, he managed the thing so well that at the time they never suspected him, although divil a other could betray them, for he was the only one knew it; an' he had the aiten o' the mutton, too, the blaggard. Faith, Ned, I know him well. Now think o' that thrick, an' him only a boy at the time!"

"He has contrived to get a sthrong back o' the boys, any how."

"He has, an' 'tis that, an' bekase he's a good hand to be undher for my revinge on Blennerhasset that made me join him."

"I donna what could make him refuse to let Alick Nulty join him?"

"Is it my cousin from Annalaghan? an' did he?"

"Divil a lie in it; it's as thrue as you're standin' there; but do you know what's suspected?"

"No."

"Why, that he has an eye on Bodagh Buie's daughter. Alick towld me that for a long time afther Connor O'Donovan was transported, the father an' son wor afeard of him, in consequence of something they

* To switch the primmer, i.e. to swear; and it is generally understood, falsely.

hard from Connor himself. Alick hard it from his sister Biddy, an' it appears that the Bodagh's daughter tould her family that he used to stare her out of countenance at mass, an' several times struv to put the *furraun** on her in hopes to get acquainted."

"He would do it; an' my hand to you, if he undher-takes it he'll not fail; an' I'll tell you another thing, if he suspected that I knew any thing about the thraich-erous thrick he put on my poor brother, the divil a toe he'd let me join him; but you see I was only a mere gorsoon at the time."

"At all evints let us keep an eye on him; an' in regard to Connor O'Donovan's business, let him not be too sure that *that's* over wid him yet. At any rate, by dad, my father has slipped out a name upon him an' us that will do him no good. The other boys now call us the *Stags of Lisdhu*, that bein' the place where his father livid, an' the nickname you see rises out of his thrachery to poor Connor O'Donovan."

"Did he ever give any hint himself about carryin' away the Bodagh's purty daughter?"

"Is it him? Oh, ho! catch him at it; he's a dam' sight too close to do any sich thing."

After some further conversation upon that and other topics, they arrived at the place of appointment which was a hedge school-house; one of those where the master, generally an unmarried man, merely wields his sceptre during school hours, leaving it open and uninhabited for the rest of the twenty-four.

The appearance of those who were here assembled was indeed singularly striking. A large fire of the unconsumed peat brought by the scholars on that morning was kindled in the middle of the floor—its usual site. Around upon stones, hobs, bosses, and seats of various descriptions, sat the "boys,"—some smoking and others drinking; for upon nights of this kind a

* An over civil and plausible manner of addressing a person.

shebeen-house keeper, uniformly a member of such societies, generally attends for the sale of his liquor, if he cannot succeed in prevailing on them to hold their meetings in his own house—a circumstance which for many reasons may not be in every case advisable. As they had not all yet assembled, nor the business of the night commenced, they were, of course, divided into several groups and engaged in various amusements. In the lower end of the house was a knot, busy at the game of “spoil five,” their ludicrous table being the crown of a hat, placed upon the floor in the centre. These all sat upon the ground, their legs stretched out, their torch-bearer holding a lit bunch of fir splinters, stuck for convenience’ sake in the muzzle of a horse pistol. In the upper end, again, sat another clique, listening to a man who was reading a treasonable ballad. Such of them as could themselves read stretched over their necks, in eagerness to peruse it along with him, and such as could not—indeed the greater number—gave force to its principles by very significant tones and gestures; some being those of melody, and others those of murder; that is to say, part of them were attempting to hum a tune in a low voice suitable to the words, whilst others more ferocious brandished their weapons, as if those against whom the spirit of the ballad was directed had been then within the reach of their savage passions. Beside the fire, and near the middle of the house, sat a man, who, by his black stock and military appearance, together with a scar on his cheek that gave him a most repulsive look, was evidently a pensioner, or old soldier. This person was engaged in examining some rusty fire-arms that had been submitted to his inspection. His self-importance was amusing, as was also the deferential aspect of those, who, with arms in their hands, hammering flints or turning screws, awaited patiently their turn for his opinion of their efficiency. But perhaps the most striking group of all was that in which a thick-necked, bull-headed young fellow, with blood-

coloured hair—a son of Rousin Redhead—who, by the way, was himself present, and another beetle-browed slip were engaged in drawing for a wager upon one of the school-boy's slates, the figure of a coffin and cross bones. A hardened looking old sinner, with murder legible in his face, held the few half-pence which they wagered in his open hand, whilst in the other he clutched a pole, surmounted by a bent bayonet that had evidently seen some service. The last group worthy remark was composed of a few persons who were writing threatening notices upon a leaf torn out of a school-boy's copy, which was laid upon what they formerly termed "a copy board," or piece of plain deal, kept upon the knees, as a substitute for desks, while the boys were writing. These amusements were resorted to while waiting for the Article Bearer, or the Captain, for such was Bartle Flanagan, who now entered the house, and saluted all present with great cordiality.

"Begad, boys," he said, "our four guards widout is worth any money. I had to pass the signword afore I could pass myself, and that's the way it ought to be. But, boys, before we go any farther, an' for fraid of thraitors, I must call the rowl. You'll stand in a row roun' the walls, an' thin we can make sure that there's no spies among us."

He then called out the roll of those who were members of his Lodge, and having ascertained that all was right, he proceeded immediately to business.

"Rousin Redhead, what's the raison you didn't take the arms from Captain St. Ledger's steward? Sixteen men armed was enough to it, an' ye failed."

"Ay, an' if you had been wid us, and sixteen more to the back o' that, you'd fail too. Begarra, Captain dear, it seems that good people is scarce. Look at Micky Mulvather there, you see his head tied up: but aldo he can play cards well enough, be me sowl he's short of one ear, any how, an' if you could meet wan o' the same steward's bullets goin' abroad at night like

ourselves for its divarsion, it might let you know how he lost it. Bartle, I tell you, a number of us isn't satisfied wid you. You send us out to meet danger, an' you won't come yourself."

"Don't you know, Rouser that I always *do* go whenever I can, but I'm caged now;* faix I don't sleep in a barn, an' can't budge as I used to do."

"An' whose tyin' you to your place, thin?"

"Rouser," replied Bartle, "I wish I had a thousand like you, not but I have fine fellows. Boys, the truth is this, you must all meet here to-morrow-night, for the short an' long of it is that I'm goin' to run away wid a wife."

"Well," replied Redhead, "sure you can do that widout our assistance, if she's willin' to come."

"Willin'! why," replied Bartle, "it's by her own appointment we're goin'."

"An' if it is, then" said the Rouser, who in truth, was the leader of the suspicious and disaffected party, in Flanagan's Lodge, "what the blazes use have you for uz?"

"Rousin' Redhead," said Bartle, casting a suspicious and malignant glance at him, "might I take the liberty of axin' what you mane by speaking to me in that disparagin' manner? Do you remimber your oath? or do you forget that you are bound by it to meet at twelve hours notice or less, whinever you're called upon.—Dhar Chriestha! man, if I hear another word of the kind out o' your lips, down you go on the black list. Boys," he proceeded, with a wheedling look of good humour to the rest, "we'll have neither Spies nor Stags here, come or go what may."

"Stags," replied Rousin Redhead, whose face had already become scarlet with indignation, "Stags, you say, Bartle Flanagan! Arrah, boys, I wonder where is poor Connor O'Donovan by this time?"

* Meaning that in his present service he slept in the dwelling-house, not in an out-house, and that he consequently could not stop out at night without observation.

"I suppose Bushin' it afore now," observed our friend Dandy Duffy, whiffing his pipe. "I bushed it myself for a year an' a half, but be Japers, I got sick of it. But any how, Bartle, you ought 'nt to speak of Stags, for although Connor refused to join us, *you* had no right to go inform upon him. Sure, only for the intherest that was made for him you'd have his blood on your sowl."

"An' if he had itself," observed one of Flanagan's friends, "'twould signify very little. The Bodagh desarved what he got, and more if he had got it. What right has he, one of our own purswadjon as he is, to hold out aginst us the way he does? Sure he's as rich as a Sassenach, an' divel resave the farden he'll subscribe towards our gettin' arms or ammunition, or towards difendin' us when we're brought to thrial. To hell's delights wid the dirty Bodagh, says myself for one!"

"An' is that by way of a defince of Captain Bartle Flanagan?" inquired Rousin Redhead indignantly. "An so our worthy Captain sint the man *across* that punished our inimy, even accordian to your own provin', and that by *staggin'* against him. Of coorse, had the miser's son been one of huz, Bartle's brains would be scathered to the four quarters of heaven long agone."

"An' how did I know but *he'd stag* against me," said Bartle very calmly.

"Dam' well you knew he would *not*," observed Ned M'Cormick, now encouraged by the bold and decided manner of Rousin Redhead. "Before ever you went into Fardorougha's service you sed to more than one that you'd make him sup sorrow for his harshness to your father and family."

"An' didn't he deserve it, Ned?—Didn't he ruin us?"

"*He* might deserve it, an' I suppose did; but what right had you to punish the innocent for the guilty? You *knewn* very well that both his son an' his wife always set their faces aginst his doins."

"Boys," said Flanagan, "I don't undherstand this, and I tell you more, I won't bear it. This night let any of you that doesn't like to be undher me say so. Rousin Redhead, you'll never meet in a Ribbon Lodge agin. You're scratched out of one book, but by way of comfort you're down in another."

"What other, Bartle?"

"The Black List. An' now I have nothin' more to say, except that if there's any thing on your mind that wants absolution, look to it."

We must now pause for a moment to reflect upon that which we suppose the sagacity of the reader has already discovered—that is, the connection between what occurred in Flanagan's lodge, and the last dialogue which took place between Nogher and Connor O'Donovan. It is evident that Nogher had spirits at work for the purpose both of watching and contravening all Flanagan's plans, and if possible, of drawing him into some position which might justify the "few friends," as he termed them, first in disgracing him, and afterwards of settling their account ultimately with a man whom they wished to blacken, as dangerous to the society of which they were members. The curse, however, of these secret confederacies, and indeed of ribbonism in general is, that the savage principle of personal vengeance is transferred from the nocturnal assault, or the mid-day assassination which may be directed against religious or political enemies, to the private bickerings and petty jealousies that must necessarily occur in a combination of ignorant and bigoted men, whose passions are guided by no principle but one of practical cruelty. This explains, as we have put it, and justly put it, the incredible number of murders which are committed in our unhappy country, under the name of waylayings and midnight attacks, where the offence that caused them cannot be traced by society at large, although it is an incontrovertible fact, that to all those who are connected with ribbonism, in its varied phases, it often happens

that the projection of such murders is known for weeks before they are perpetrated. The wretched assassin who murders a man that has never offended him personally, and who suffers himself to become the instrument of executing the hatred which originates from a principle of general enmity against a *class*, will not be likely, once his hands are stained with blood to spare *any one* who may, by direct personal injury, incur his resentment. Every such offence, where secret societies are concerned, is made a matter of personal feeling, and a trial of strength between factions, and of course a similar spirit is superinduced among persons of the same creed and principles to that which actuates them against those who differ from them in politics and religion. It is true, that the occurrence of murders of this character has been referred to as a proof that secret societies are not founded or conducted upon a spirit of religious rancour; but such an assertion is, in some cases, the result of gross ignorance, and in many more, of far grosser dishonesty. Their murdering each other is not at all a proof of any such thing, but it is a proof, as we have said, that their habit of taking away human life, and shedding human blood upon slight grounds or political feelings, follows them from their conventional principles to their private resentments, and is, therefore, such a consequence as might naturally be expected to result from a combination of men, who in one sense consider murder no crime. Thus does this secret tyranny fall back upon society, as well as upon those who are concerned in it, as a double curse, and indeed we believe that even the greater number of these unhappy wretches whom it keeps within its toils, would feel happy that the principle were rooted out of the country for ever.

"An' so you're goin' to put my father down on the black list," said the beetle-browed son of the Rouser. "Very well, Bartle, do so; but do you see that," he added, pointing to the sign of the coffin and cross bones which he had previously drawn upon the slate; "*dhar*

an *sphirít Neev*,* if you do you'll waken some mornin' in a warmer country than Ireland."

"Very well," said Bartle, quietly, but evidently shrinking from a threat nearly as fearful, and far more daring than his own, "you know I have nothin' to do except my duty. Yez are goin' against the CAUSE, an' I must report yez; afther that whatever happens won't come from me, nor from any one here. It is from thim that's in higher quarters you'll get your doom, an' not from me, or, as I said afore, from any one here. Mark that; but indeed you know it as well as I do, an' I believe, Rouser, a good deal better."

Flanagan's argument, to men who understood its dreadful import, was one before which almost every description of personal courage must quail. Persons were then present, Rousin Redhead among the rest who had been sent upon some of those midnight missions, which contumacy against the system, when operating in its cruelty, had occasioned. Persons of humane disposition declining to act in these sanguinary villanies are generally the first to be sacrificed, for, as in the case of the execrable Inquisition, individual life is nothing when obstructing the propagation of the general principle.

This truth, coming from Flanagan's lips, they themselves, some of whom had executed its spirit, knew but too well. The difference, however, between their apprehensions, so far as they were individually concerned was not much; Flanagan had the person to fear, and his opponents the principle.

Redhead, however, who knew that whatever he had executed upon delinquents like himself might also upon himself be visited in his turn, saw that his safest plan for the present was to submit; for indeed the meshes of

* The name of the Third Person of the Trinity is seldom sworn by in Ireland, unless when some dreadful purpose is determined on.

the Whiteboy system, like those of the Inquisition, leave no man's life safe, if he express hostile opinions against it.

"Bartle," said he, "you know I'm no coward; an' I grant you've a long head at plannin' anything you set about. I don't see, in the mane time, why afther all, we should quarrel. You know *me*, Bartle; an' if any thing happens me, *it won't be for nothin'*. I say no more; but I say still that you throw the danger upon uz, and don't—"

"Rousin Redhead," said Bartle, "give me your hand. I say now what I didn't wish to say to-night afore, by Japers, you're worth five men; an' I'll tell you all, boys, you must meet the Rouser here to-morrow night, an' we'll have a dhrink at my cost; an' boys—Rouser, hear me—you all know your oaths; we'll do something to-morrow night—an' I say agin, Rouser, I'll be wid yez an' among yez; an' to prove my opinion of the Rouser, I'll allow him to head us."

"An', by the crass o' Moses, I'll do it in style," rejoined the hot-headed but unthinking miscreant, who did not see that the adroit captain was still placing him in the post of danger. "I don't care a damn what it is—we'll meet here to-morrow night, boys, an' I'll show you that I can lead as well as folly."

"Whatever happens," said Bartle, "we oughtn't to have any words or bickerins among ourselves at any rate. I understand that two among yez struck one another. Sure ye know that there's not a blow ye give to a brother, but's a perjury—and there's no use in that, barrin' in a righteous cause, an' to help forrid the thruth. I'll say no more about it now; but I hope there 'ill never be another blow given among yez. Now, get a hat some o' yez, till we draw cuts for six that I want to beat Tom Lynchagan, of Lisdhu; he's workin' for St. Ledger, afther gettin' two notices. He's a quiet, civil man, no doubt; but that's not the thing. We must have obadience, or where's the use of our meetins'

at all! Give him a sound batin', but no further—break no bones."

He then marked slips of paper, equal in number to those who were present, with the numerals 1, 2, 3, &c. to correspond, after which he determined that the three first numbers and the three last should go—all which was agreed to without remonstrance, or any apparent show of reluctance whatever.

"Now boys," he continued, "don't forget to attend to-morrow night; an' I say to every man of you, as Darby Spaight said to the devil, whin he promised to join the rebellion, '*be dha pheeka laght*,' (bring your pike with you)—bring the weapons."

"An' who's the purty girl that's goin' to get you, Captain Bartle?" inquired Dandy Duffy.

"The purtiest girl in this parish, any how," replied Flanagan, unawares.—The words, however, were scarcely out of his lips, when he felt he had been indiscreet. He immediately added—"that is, if she is of this parish; but I didn't say she is. Maybe we'll have to thravel a bit to find her out; but come what come may, don't neglect to be all here about half-past nine o'clock, wid your arms an' amunition."

Duffy, who had sat beside Ned M'Cormick during the night, gave him a significant look, which the other, who, in truth, joined himself to Flanagan's lodge only to watch his movements, as significantly returned.

When the men deputed to beat Lynchagan had blackened their faces, the lodge dispersed for the night, the two latter taking their way home together, in order to consider of that which they had just witnessed.

CHAPTER XVII.

INDEED it was no wonder that Dandy Duffy and Ned M'Cormick should have exchanged significant glances with each other, upon Flanagan's having admitted unawares that the female he designed to take away on the following night was "the purtiest girl in the parish." The truth was, he imagined at the moment that his designs were fully matured, and in the secret vanity, or rather, we should say, in the triumphant villany of his heart, he allowed an expression to incautiously pass his lips which was nearly tantamount to an admission of Una's name. The truth of this he instantly felt. But even had he not by his own natural sagacity perceived it, the look of mutual intelligence which his quick and suspicious eye observed to pass between Duffy and Ned M'Cormick would at once have convinced him. Una was not merely entitled to the compliment so covertly bestowed upon her extraordinary personal attractions, but in addition it might have been truly affirmed, that neither that nor any adjoining parish could produce a female, in any rank, who could compete with her in the character of a rival beauty.

This was admitted by all who had ever seen the *colleen dhas dhun*, or "the purty brown girl," as she was called, and it followed, as a matter of course, that Flanagan's words could imply no other than the Bodagh's daughter.

It is unnecessary to say, that Flanagan, knowing this as he did, could almost have bit a portion of his own tongue off as a punishment for its indiscretion. It was then too late, however, to efface the impression which the words were calculated to make, and he felt besides that he would only strengthen the suspicion by an over anxiety to remove it. He therefore repeated his orders respecting the appointed meeting on the following night,

although he had already resolved in consequence of his indiscretion to change the whole plan of his operations.

Such was the precaution with which this cowardly but accomplished miscreant proceeded towards the fulfilment of his purposes, and such was his apprehension lest the premature suspicion of a single individual might by contingent treachery defeat his design, or affect his personal safety. He had made up his mind to communicate the secret of his enterprise to none until the very moment of its execution ; and this being effected, his ultimate plans were laid, as he thought, with sufficient skill to baffle pursuit, and defeat either the malice of his enemies or the vengeance of the law.

No sooner had they left the school-house than the Dandy and M'Cormick immediately separated from the rest, in order to talk over the proceedings of the night, with a view to their suspicions of the "Captain." They had not gone far, however, when they were overtaken by two others, who came up with them at a quick, or if I may be allowed the expression, an earnest pace. The two latter were Rousin Redhead and his son Corney.

"So, boys" said the Rouser, "what do you think of our business to-night? Didn't I get well out of his clutches?"

"Be my throth, Rouser darlin'," replied the Dandy, "you niver wor complately *in* them till this minnit."

"*Dhar ma lham charth*,"* said Corney, "I say he's a black-hearted villin, and *damnho orm*, but it 'ud be aquil to absolution from the priest's hand to knock him on the head."

"But how am I *in* his clutches, Dandy?" inquired the Rouser.

"Why," rejoined Duffy, "don't you see that for all you said about his throwin' the post of danger on other people, he's givin' it to you to-morrow night."

Rousin Redhead stood still for nearly half a minute

* By my right hand.

without uttering a syllable; at length he seized Dandy by the arm, which he pressed with the grip of Hercules, for he was a man of huge size and strength.

"*Chorp an dioual*, you giant, is it my arm you're goin' to brake?"

"Be the 'tarnal primmer, Dandy Duffy, but I see it now," said the Rouser, struck by Bartle's address, and indignant at the idea of being over-reached by him, "Eh, Corney," he continued, addressing his son, "hasn't he the Rouser *set*? I see, boys, I see. I'm a marked man wid him, an' it's likely, for all he said, will be on the black list afore he sleeps. Well, Corney avic, you and others know how to act if any thing happens me."

"I don't think," said M'Cormick, who was a lad of considerable penetration, "that you need be afeard of either him or the black list. Be me sowl, I know the same Bartle well, an' a bigger coward never put a coat on his back. He got as pale as a sheet to-night when Corney there threatened him; not but he's deaseful enough, I grant; but he'd be a greater tyrant, only he's so hen-hearted."

"But what job," said the Rouser, "has he for us to-morrow night, do you think? It must be somethin past the common. Who the *dioual* can he have in his eye to run away wid?"

"Who's the purtiest girl in the parish, Rouser?" asked Ned. "I thought every one knew that."

"Why, you don't mane for to say," replied Redhead, "that he'd have the spunk in him to run away wid Bodagh Buie's daughter? Be the contents o' the book, if I thought he'd thry it, I'd stick to him like a Throjan; the dirty Bodagh, that as Larry Lawdher said to-night, never backed or supported us, or gev a single rap to help us, if a penny 'ud save one of us from the gallis, The divil's delights to him an' all belongin' to him, I say too; an' I tell you what it is, boys, *dhar Chriestha*, if Flanagan has the manliness to take away his daughter, I'll be the first to sledge the door into pieces."

"*Dhar a spiridh*, an' so will I," said the young beetle-browed tiger beside him, "thim that can an' won't help on the Cause deserves no marcy from it."

Thus spoke from the lips of ignorance and brutality that *esprit du corps* of blood, which never scruples to sacrifice all minor resentments to any opportunity of extending THE CAUSE, as it is termed, or that ideal monster, in the promotion of which the worst principles of our nature, still the most active, are sure to experience the greatest glut of low and gross gratification. Oh, if reason, virtue, and true religion, were only as earnest and vigorous in extending their own cause, as ignorance, persecution, and bigotry, how soon would society present a different aspect. But, unfortunately, *they cannot* stoop to call in the aid of tyranny, and cruelty, and bloodshed, nor of the thousand other atrocious allies of falsehood and dishonesty, of which ignorance, craft, and cruelty never fail to avail themselves, and without which they could not proceed successfully.

M'Cormick having heard Rousin Redhead and his son utter such sentiments, did not feel at all justified in admitting them to any confidence with himself or Duffy. He accordingly replied with more of adroitness than of candour to the savage sentiments they expressed.

"Faith, you're right, Rouser; he'd never have spunk, sure enough, to carry off the Bodagh's daughter. But in the mane time, who was spakin' about her? Begor if I thought he had the heart I'd—but he hasn't."

"I know he hasn't," said the Rouser.

"He's nothing but a white-livered dog," said Duffy.

"I thought, to tell you the truth," said M'Cormick, "that you might give a guess as to the girl, but for the Bodagh's daughter, he has *not* the mettle for that."

"If he had," replied the Rouser, "he might count upon Corney an' myself as right-hand men. We all have a crow to pluck wid the dirty Bodagh, an' be me zounds it 'ill puzzle him to find a bag to hould the feathers."

"One 'ud think he got enough," observed M'Cormick, "in the loss of his haggard."

"But that didn't come from *uz*," said the Rouser; "we have our share to give him yet, an' never fear he'll get it. We'll taich him to abuse us, and set us at defiance as he's constantly doin'."

"Well, Rouser," said M'Cormick, who now felt anxious to get rid of him, "we'll be wishin' you a good night; we're goin' to have a while of a *kailyeah** up at my uncle's. Corney, my boy, good night."

"Good night kindly, boys," replied the others, "an' *banaght laht*,† any how."

"Rouser, you divil," said the Dandy, calling after them, "will you an' blessed Corney there, offer up a Pattheranavy for my convansion? for I'm sure that both your prayers will go far."

Rousin Redhead and Corney responded to this with a loud laugh and a banter.

"Ay, ay, Dandy; but be me soul, if they only go as far as your own goodness sint you before now, it'll be *seven years* before they come back agin; Eh, do you smell any thing?—ha, ha, ha!"

"The big bosthoon hot me fairly, begad," observed the Dandy, aside;—"The devil's own tongue he has."

"Bad cess to you, for a walkin' bonfire, an' go home," replied the Dandy; "I'm not a match for you wid the tongue, at all at all."

"No, nor wid any thing else, barrin' your heels," replied the Rouser; "or your hands, if there was a horse in the way. Arrah, Dandy?"

"Well, you graceful youth, well?"

"You ought to be a good workman by this time; you first larned your thrade, an' thin you put in your seven years apprenticeship†—ha, ha, ha!"

"Faith, an Rouser, I can promise you a merry end,

* An evening conversational visit. † Our blessing be with you.

‡ Alluding to the term of his transportation.

my beauty; you'll be the only man that'll dance at your own funeral! an' I'll tell you what, Rouser, it'll be like an egg hornpipe, wid your eyes covered. That's what I call an active death, avouchal!"

"Faith, an' if you wor a priest, Dandy, you'd be sure to die with your face to the congregation. You'll be a rope-dancer yourself yet; only this, Dandy, that you'll be *undher* the rope instead of over it; so good night."

"Rouser," exclaimed the other, "Rousin Redhead!"

"Go home," replied the Rouser. "Good night, I say; you've thravelled a great deal too far for an ignorant man like me to stand any chance wid you. Your tongue's lighter than your hands* even, and that's payin' it a compliment."

"Divil sweep you, Brien," said Dandy, "you'd beat the divil an' Docthor Fosther. Good night agin!"

"Oh, *ma bannaght laht*, I say!"

And they accordingly parted.

"Now," said Ned, "what's to be done, Dandy? As sure as gun's iron, this limb of hell will take away the Bodagh's daughther, if we don't do something to prevent it."

"I'm not puttin' it past him," returned his companion, "but *how* to prevent it is the thing. He has the boys all on his side, barrin' yourself and me, an' a few more."

"An' you see, Ned, the Bodagh is so much hated, by this crew that even some of thim that don't like Flanagan won't scruple to join him in this."

"An' if we wor known to let the cat out o' the bag to the Bodagh, we might as well prepare our coffins at wanst."

"Faith, sure enough—that's but gospel, Ned," replied the Dandy; "still it 'ud be the *milliah* murders to let the double-faced villin carry off sich a girl."

"I'll tell you what I'll do thin, Dandy," rejoined

* In Ireland to be *light-handed* signifies to be a thief.

Ned, "what if you'd walk down wid me as far as the Bodagh's."

"For why? Sure they're in bed now, man alive."

"I know that," said M'Cormick; "But how-an'-ever, if you come down wid me that far, I'll contrive to get in somehow, widout wakenin' them."

"The dickens you will! How the sorra, man?"

"No matther, I will; an' you see," he added, pulling out a flask of spirits, "I'm not goin' impty handed."

"Phew!" exclaimed Duffy, "is it there you are?—oh, that indeed! Faith I got a whisper of it some time ago, but it wint out o' my head. Biddy Nulty, faix—a nate clean girl she is too."

"But that's not the best of it, Dandy. Sure blood alive, I can tell you a sacret—may I depind?"

"Honour bright"

"The Bodagh's daughter, man, 's to give her a portion, in regard of her bein' so thrue to Connor O'Donovan. Bad luck to the oath she'd swear against him if they'd make a queen of her, but outdone the counsellors and lawyers, an' all the whole bobbery o' them, whin they wanted her to turn king's evidence. Now, it's not but I'd do any thing to sarve the purty Bodagh's daughter widout it; but you see, Dandy, if White-liver takes her away, I may stand a bad chance for the portion."

"Say no more; I'll go wid you; but how will you get in, Ned?"

"Never you mind that; here, take a pull out of this flask before you go any farther. Blood and flummery! what a night; divil a my finger I can see before me. Here—where's your hand?—that's it; warm your heart, my boy."

"You intend thin, Ned, to give Biddy the hard word about Flanagan?"

"Why, to bid her put them on their guard; sure there can be no harm in that."

"They say, Ned, it's not safe to trust a woman; what if you axe to see the Bodagh's son, the young sogarth."

"I'd trust my life to Biddy—she that was so honest to the Donovan's wouldn't be desateful to her sweetheart that—he—hem—she's far gone in consate wid—your sowl. Her brother Alick's to meet me at the Bodagh's on his way from his lodge, for they hould a meetin' to-night too."

"Never say it agin. I'll stick to you; so push an', for it's late. You'll be apt to make up the match before you part, I suppose."

"That won't be hard to do at any time, Dandy."

Both then proceeded down the same field which we have already said was called the Black Park, in consequence of its dark and mossy soil. Having with some difficulty found the stile at the lower end of it, they passed into a short car track, which they were barely able to follow.

The night, considering that it was the month of November, was close and foggy—such as frequently follows a calm day of incessant rain. The bottoms were plashy, the drains all full, and the small rivulets and streams about the country were up above their banks, whilst the larger rivers swept along with the hoarse continuous murmurs of an unusual flood. The sky was one sheet of darkness—for not a cloud could be seen, or any thing except the passing gleam of a cottage taper, lessened by the haziness of the night, into a mere point of faint light, and thrown by the same cause into a distance which appeared to the eye much more remote than that of reality.

After having treaded their way for nearly a mile, the water spouting at almost every step up to their knees, they at length came to an old bridle way, deeply shaded with hedges on each side. They had not spoken much since the close of their last dialogue; for the truth is, each had enough to do, independently of dialogue, to keep himself out of drains and quagmires. An occasional

"hanamondiouol, I'm in to the hinchies;" "holy St. Pether I'm stuck;" "tundher and turf, where are you at all?" or, "by this and by that, I dunna where I am," were the only words that passed between them, until they reached the little road we are speaking of, which, in fact, was one unbroken rut, and on such a night almost impassable.

"Now," said M'Cormick, we musn't keep on this divil's gut, for conshumin' to the shoe or stockin' ever we'd bring out of it; however do you folly me, Dandy, an' there's no danger."

"I can do nothing else," replied the other, "for I know no more of where I am than the man in the moon, who, if all's thrue that's sed of him, is the biggest blockhead alive."

M'Cormick, who knew the way well, turned off the road into a pathway that ran inside the hedge and along the fields, but parallel with the muddy boreen in question. They now found themselves upon comparatively clear ground, and with the exception of an occasional slip or two, in consequence of the heavy rain, they had little difficulty in advancing. At this state of their journey not a light was to be seen, nor a sound of life heard, and it was evident that the whole population of the neighbourhood had sunk to rest.

"Where will this bring us to, Ned?" asked the Dandy—"I hope we'll soon be at the Bodagh's."

M'Cormick stood and suddenly pressed his arm. "Whisht," said he, in an under tone; "I think I hard voices."

"No," replied the other in the same low tone.

"I am sure I did," said Ned; "take my word for it, there's people before us on the boreen—whisht!"

They both listened, and very distinctly heard a confused but suppressed murmur of voices, apparently about a hundred yards before them on the little bridle way. Without uttering a word, they both proceeded as quietly and as quickly as possible; and in a few

minutes nothing separated them but the hedge. The party on the road were wallowing through the mire with great difficulty, many of them, at the same time, bestowing very energetic execrations upon it, and upon those who suffered it to remain in such a condition. Even the oaths, however, were uttered in so low and cautious a tone, that neither M'Cormick nor the Dandy could distinguish their voices so clearly, as to recognise those who spoke, supposing that they had known them. Once or twice they heard the clashing of arms, or of iron instruments of some sort; and it seemed to them that the noise was occasioned by the accidental jostling together of those who carried them. At length, they heard one voice exclaim rather testily, "D—n your blood, Bartle Flanagan, will you have patience, till I get my shoe out o' the mud; you don't expect me to lose it, do you? We're not goin' to get a purty wife, whatever you may be."

The reply to this was short, but pithy—"May all the devil's in hell's fire pull the tongue out o' you; for nothin' but hell itself, you villin, timpted me to bring you wid me."

This was not intended to be heard; nor was it by the person against whom it was uttered, he being some distance behind; but as Ned and his companion were at the moment exactly on the other side of the hedge, they could hear the words of this precious soliloquy—for such it was—delivered, as they were, with a suppressed energy of malignity, worthy of the heart that suggested them.

M'Cormick immediately pulled Duffy's coat, without speaking a word, as a hint to follow him with as little noise as possible, which he did; and ere many minutes, they were so far in advance of the others, as to be enabled to converse without risk of being heard.

"*Dhar Dheah*, Duffy," said his companion, "there's not a minute to be lost."

"There is not," replied the other; but what will you

do with me? I'll lend a hand in any way I can; but remimber that if we're seen, or if it's known that we go against them in this——"

"I know," said the other, "we're *gone* men*; still we must manage it somehow, so as to save the girl. God! if it was only on Connor O'Donovan's account, that's far away this night, I'd do it. Dandy, you wor only a boy whin Blennerhasset prosecuted you; an' people pitied you at the time; and now they don't think much the worse of you for it; an' you know it was proved since that what you sed then was thrue, that other rogues made you do it, and thin left you in the lurch. But, d—n it, where's the use of all this. Give me your hand—it's life or death—can I trust you?"

"You may," said the other, "you may, Ned; do whatsomever you wish with me."

"Then," continued Ned, "I'll go into the house, and do you keep near them, widout bein' seen; watch their motions; but, above all things, if they take her off, folly on till you see where they'll bring her; after that, they can get backin' enough—the sogers, if they're a wantin'."

"Depind an me, Ned; to the core depind on me."

They had now reached the Bodagh's house, upon which, as upon every other object around them, the shadows of night rested heavily. The Dandy took up his position behind one of the porches of the gate that divided the little grass plot before the hall door, and the farm-yard, as being the most central spot, and from which he could with more ease hear, or, as far as might be, observe the plan and nature of their proceedings.

It was at least fifteen minutes before Flanagan's party reached the little avenue that led up to the Bodagh's residence; for we ought to have told our

* Lost men.

readers that M'Cormick and Duffy, having taken a short path, left the others—who, being ignorant of it, were forced to keep to the road—considerably behind them. Ned was, consequently, from ten to fifteen minutes in the house previous to their arrival. At length, they approached silently, and with that creeping pace which betokens either fear or caution, as the case may be, and stood outside the gate which led into the grass plot before the hall-door, not more than three or four yards from the porch of the farm-yard gate where Dandy was concealed. And here he had an opportunity of witnessing the extreme skill with which Flanagan conducted this nefarious exploit. After listening for about a minute, he found that their worthy leader was not present; but he almost immediately discovered that he was engaged in placing guards upon all the back windows of the dwelling-house and kitchen. During his absence, the following short consultation took place among those whom he left behind him for the purpose of taking a personal part in the enterprize:—

“It was too thrue what Rousin Redhead said to-night, observed one of them; he always takes care to throw the post of danger on some one else. Now, it's not that I'm afeard; but, as he's to have the girl himself, it's but fair that his own neck should run the first danger, an' not mine.”

They all assented to this.

“Well, then, boys,” he proceeded, “if yez support me, we'll make him head this business himself. It's his own consarn, not ours; an' besides, as he houlds the Articles, it's his duty to lead us in every thing. So, be the saykermment, I, for one, won't take away his girl, an' himself keepin' back. If there's any one here that'll take my place or his, let him now say so.”

They were all silent as to *that* point; but most of them said they wished, at all events, to give “the dirty Bodagh,” for so they usually called him, something to

remember them by, in consequence of his having, on all occasions, stood out against the system.

"Still, it's fair," said several of them, "that in takin' away the colleen, Bartle should go foremost, as she's for himself an' not for huz."

"Well, then, you all agree to this?"

"We do; but whisht—here he is."

Deeply mortified was their leader on finding that they had come unanimously to this determination. It was too late now, however, to reason with them, and the crime, to the perpetration of which he brought them, too dangerous in its consequences to render a quarrel with them safe or prudent. He felt himself, therefore, in a position which, of all others, he did not covet. Still his adroitness was too perfect to allow any symptoms of chagrin or disappointment to be perceptible in his voice and manner, although the truth is, he cursed them in his heart at the moment, and vowed in some shape or other to visit their insubordination with vengeance.

Such indeed is the nature of those secret confederacies that are opposed to the laws of the land and the spirit of religion. It matters little how open and apparently honest the conduct of such men may be among each other; there is, notwithstanding this, a distrust, a fear, a suspicion lurking at every heart, that renders personal security unsafe, and life miserable. But how, indeed, can they repose confidence in each other, when they know that in consequence of their connexion with such systems, many of the civil duties of life cannot be performed without perjury on the one hand, or risk of life on the other, and that the whole principle of the combination, is founded upon hatred, revenge, and a violation of all moral obligation. Such a system is a deadly curse to our country, and requires all the vigilance, both of religion and law, to put it down.

"Well then," said the leader, "as your minds is made up, boys, folly me as quietly as you can, an' don't spake a word in your own voice."

They approached the hall-door, with the exception of six, who stood guarding the front windows of the dwelling-house and kitchen; and to the Dandy's astonishment, the whole party, amounting to about eighteen, entered the house without either noise or obstruction of any kind.

"By Japers," thought he to himself, "there's thraichery there, any how."

This now to the Dandy was a moment of intense interest. Though by no means a coward, or a young fellow of delicate nerves, yet his heart beat furiously against his ribs, and his whole frame shook with excitement. He would, in truth, much rather have been engaged in the outrage, than forced as he was merely to look on without an opportunity of taking a part in it, one way or the other. Such at least, were his own impressions, when the report of a gun was heard inside the house.

"*Dhar an Iffrin*,"* thought he again, "I'll boult an' see what's goin' an—*oh ma shaght millia mallach orth*,† Flanagan, if you spill blood—Jasus above! Well, any how, come or go what may, we can hang him for this—glory be to God!"

These reflections were very near breaking forth into words.

"*Dhar Iosha*, I don't like that," said one of the guards to another; "he may take the girl away, but it's not the thing to murder any one belongin' to a dacent family, that gives good employment."

"If it's only the Bodagh got it," replied his comrade, who was no other than Mickey Mulvather, "divil the hair I care. When my brother Barney that suffered for *Caam Beal* (crooked mouth) Grime's business, was in before his thrial, divil resave the taisther the same Bodagh would give to defend him."

"Damn it," rejoined the other, "but to murder a

* By the mass. † Seven hundred thousand curses on you.

man in his bed! Why now, if it was even comin' home from a fair or market; but at midnight, an' in his bed, begorra, it is not the thing, Mickey."

There was now a pause in the conversation for some minutes; at length screams were heard, and the noise of men's feet, as if engaged in a scuffle upon the stairs, for the hall-door lay open. A light too was seen, but it appeared to have been blown out; the same noise of feet, trampling as if still in a tumult, approached the door, and almost immediately afterwards Flanagan's party approached, bearing in their arms a female, who panted and struggled as if she had been too weak to shriek or call for assistance. The hall-door was then pulled to and locked by those who were outside.

The Dandy could see by the passing gleam of light, which fell upon those who watched behind him, that their faces were blackened, and their clothes covered by a shirt, as was usual with the whiteboys of old, and for the same object—that of preventing themselves being recognised by their apparel.

"So far so good," said Flanagan, who cared not now whether his voice was known or not; "the prize is mine, boys, an' now to bring *ma colleen dhas dhun* to a snug place, an' a friendly priest that I have to put the knot on us for life."

"Be *heaventhers*," thought Duffy, "I'll put a different kind of knot on you for that, if I should swing myself for it."

They hurried onwards with as much speed as possible, bearing the fainting female in a seat formed by clasping their hands together. Duffy still stood in his place of concealment, waiting to let them get so far in advance as that he might dog them without danger of being heard. Just then a man cautiously approached, and in a whisper asked, "is that Dandy?"

"It is—Ned, how is this? all's lost."

"No, no—I hope not—but go an an' watch them; we'll folly as soon as we get help. My curse on Alick

Nulty, he disappointed me an' didn't come; if he had, why some of the Bodagh's servant boys would be up wid us in the kitchen, an' we could bate them back aisy; for Flanagan, as I tould you is a coward."

"Well thin I'll trace thim," replied the other; "but you know in sich darkness, as this you haven't a minute to lose, otherwise you'll miss them."

"Go an, but afore you go listen—be the light of day, not that we have much of it now any way—by the vestment, Biddy Nulty's worth her weight in bank of Ireland notes; now pelt an afther them; I'll tell you again."

Flanagan's party were necessarily forced to retrace their steps along the sludgy boreen we have mentioned, and we need scarcely say, that in consequence of the charge with which they were incumbered, their progress was proportionably slow; to cross the fields on such a night was out of the question.

The first thing Flanagan did, when he found his prize safe was to tie a handkerchief about her mouth, that she might not scream, and to secure her hands together by the wrists. Indeed the first of these precautions seemed to be scarcely necessary, for what with the terror occasioned by such unexpected and frightful violence, and the extreme delicacy of her health, it was evident that she could not utter even a shriek. Yet did she, on the other hand, lapse into fits of such spasmodic violence as, wrought up as she was by the horror of her situation, called forth all her physical energies, and literally gave her the strength of three women.

"Well, well," observed one of the fellows who had assisted in holding her down during these wild fits, "you may talk of jinteel people, but be the piper o' Moses, that same sick daughter of the Bodagh's is the hardiest sprout I've laid my hands on this month o' Sundays."

"Maybe you'd make as hard a battle yourself,"

replied he to whom he spoke, "if you wor forced to a thing you hate as much as she hates Bartle."

"Maybe so," rejoined the other, with an incredulous shrug, that seemed to say he was by no means satisfied by the reasoning of his companion.

Bartle now addressed his charge with a hope of reconciling her, if possible, to the fate of becoming united to him.

"Don't be at all alarmed, Miss Oona, for indeed you may take my word for it, that I'll make as good and as lovin' a husband as ever had a purty wife. It's two or three years since I fell in consate wid you, an' I needn't tell you, darlin', how happy I am now that you're mine. I have two horses waitin' for us at the end of this vile road, an' plase Providence, we'll ride onwards a bit, to a friend's house of mine, where I've a priest ready to tie the knot; an' to-morrow, if you're willin', we'll start for America; but if you don't like that, we'll live together till you'll be willin' enough, I hope, to go any where I wish. So take heart, darlin', take heart. As for the money I made free wid out o' your desk, it'll help to keep us comfortable; it was your own, you know, an' who has a betther right to be at the spendin' of it?"

This, which was meant for consolation, utterly failed, or rather aggravated the sufferings of the affrighted girl they bore, who once more struggled with a power that resembled the intense muscular strength of epilepsy, more than any thing else. It literally required four of them to hold her down, so dreadfully spasmodic were her efforts to be free.

The delay caused by those occasional workings of terror, at a moment when Flanagan expected every sound to be the noise of pursuit, wrought up his bad passions to a furious height. His own companions could actually hear him grinding his teeth with vexation and venom, whenever any thing on her part occurred to retard their flight. All this, however, he kept to

himself, owing to the singular command he possessed over his passions. Nay, he undertook once more the task of reconciling her to the agreeable prospect, as he termed it, that life presented to her.

“ We’ll be happy as the day’s long,” said he, “ espishilly when heaven sends us a family; an’, upon my throth, a purty mother you’ll make. I suppose, darlin’ love, you wondher how I got in to-night, but I tell you, I’ve my wits about me; you don’t know that it was I encouraged Biddy Nulty to go to live wid you, but I knew what I was about then; Biddy it was that left the door open for me, an’ that tould me the room you lay in, an’ the place you kep your hard goold an’ notes in; I mintion these things to show you how I had you hemmed in, an’ that your wisest way is to submit widout makin’ a rout about it. You know that even if you wor taken from me this minnit, there ’ud be a stain upon your name that ’ud never lave it, an’ it would’nt be my business, you know, to clear up your character, but the conthrairy. As for Biddy, the poor fool, I did all in my power to prevint her bein’ fond o’ me, but ever since we two lived wid the ould miser, somehow she couldn’t.”

For sometime before he had proceeded thus far, there was felt by those who carried their fair charge, a slight working of her whole body, especially of the arms, and in a moment, Flanagan, who walked a little in advance of her, with his head bent down, that he might not be put to the necessity of speaking loud, suddenly received, right upon his nose, such an incredible facer, as made the blood spin a yard out of it.

“ May all the curses of heaven an’ hell blast you, for a cowardly, thraicherous, parjured *stag*!—why, you black-hearted informer, see now what you’ve made by your cunnin’. Well, we hope you’ll keep your word—won’t I make a purty mother, an’ won’t we be as happy as the day’s long, espishilly when heaven sends us a family! Why, you rap o’ hell, aren’t you a laughin’-stock this minute? An’ to go to take away my name too—an’

to lave the guilt of some other body's thraichery on me, that you *knew* in your burnin' sowl to be innocent—me, a poor girl that has only my name and good character to carry me through the world. Oh, you mane spirited, revengeful dog, for you're not a man, or you'd not go to take such revinge upon a woman, an' all for sayin' an' puttin' it out on you, what I ever an' always will do, that you struv to hang Connor O'Donovan, knowin' that it was yourself did the crime the poor boy is now sufferin' for. Ha! may the sweetest an' bitterest of bad luck both meet upon you, you villē! Amin, I pray this night!"

The scene that followed this discovery, and the unexpected act which produced it, could not, we think, be properly described by either pen or pencil. Flanagan stood with his hands alternately kept to his nose, from which he flung away the blood, as it sprung out in a most copious stream. Two-thirds, indeed we might say three-fourths, of his party were convulsed with suppressed laughter, nor could they prevent an occasional cackle from being heard, when forcibly drawing in their breath, in an effort not to offend their leader. The discovery of the mistake was, in itself, extremely ludicrous, but when the home truths, uttered by Biddy, and the indescribable bitterness caused by the disappointment, joined to the home blow, were all put together, it might be said that the darkness of hell itself was not so black as the rage, hatred, and thirst of vengeance which at this moment consumed Bartle Flanagan's heart. He who had laid his plans so artfully, that he thought failure in securing his prize impossible, now not only to feel that he was baffled by the superior cunning of a girl, and made the laughing-stock of his own party, who valued him principally upon his ability in such matters; but in addition to this, to have his heart and feelings torn, as it were, out of his body, and flung down before him and his confreres in all their monstrous deformity, and to be jeered at, moreover, and despised, and literally

cuffed by the female who outreached him—this was too much; all the worst passions within him were fired, and he swore in his own heart a deep and blasphemous oath, that Biddy Nulty never should part from him unless as a degraded girl.

The incident we have just related happened so quickly that Flanagan had not time to reply a single word, and Biddy followed up her imprecation by a powerful effort to release herself.

“Let me home this minnit, you villin,” she continued; “now that you find yourself on the wrong scent—boys, don’t hould me, nor back that ruffin to his villany.”

“Hould her like hell,” said Bartle, “an’ tie her up wanst more; we’ll gag you too, my lady—ay will we. Take away your name! *Dhar Chriestha*, I’ll take care you’ll carry shame upon your face from this night to the hour of your death. Character indeed!—ho, by the cross I’ll lave you that little of that will go far wid you.”

“Maybe not,” replied Biddy; “the same God that disappointed you in hangin’ Connor O’Donovan——”

“Damn you,” said he, “take that;” and as he spoke he struck the poor girl a heavy blow in the cheek, which cut her deeply, and for a short time rendered her speechless.

“Bartle,” said more than one of them, “that’s onmanly, an’ it’s conthrary to the regulations.”

“To perdition wid the regulations! Hasn’t the vagabone drawn a pint o’ blood from my nose already—look at that,” he exclaimed, throwing away a handful of the warm gore—“divil seize her, look at that. Ho, be the ——” He made another onset at the yet unconscious girl as he spoke, and would have inflicted still further punishment upon her, were it not that he was prevented.

“Stop,” said several of them, “if you wor over us fifty times, you won’t lay another finger on her, that’s wanst for all, so be quiet.”

"Are ye threatenin' me?" he asked furiously, but in an instant he changed his tone—"boys dear," continued the wily but unmanly villain—"boys dear, can ye blame me?—disappointed as I am by this—by this—*ha! anhién na shreepa**—I'll—" but again he checked himself, and at length burst out into a bitter fit of weeping.—"Look at this," he proceeded, throwing away another handful of blood, "I've lost a quart of it by her!"

"Be the hand of my body," said one of them in a whisper, "he's like every coward, it's at his own blood he's cryin'; be the vartue o' my oath that man's not the thing to depend on."

"Is she tied an' gagged?" he then inquired.

"She is," replied those who tied her. "It was very aisy done, Bartle, afther the blow you hot her."

"It wasn't altogether out of ill-will I hot her aither," he replied, "although, boys dear, you know how she vexed me; but you see, the thruth is, she'd 'a given us a great dale o' throuble in gettin' her quiet."

"An' you tuck the right way to do that," they replied ironically; and then added, "Bartle Flanagan, you may thank the oaths we tuck, or be the crass, a single man of us wouldn't assist you in *this* consarn, afther your cowardly behavior to this poor girl. Takin' away the Bodagh's daughter was another thing; you had betther let the girl go home."

Biddy had now recovered, and heard this suggestion with joy, for the poor girl began to entertain serious apprehensions of Flanagan's revenge and violence, if left alone with him; she could not speak, however, and those who bore her quickened their pace at his desire, as much as they could.

"No," said Bartle, artfully, "I'll keep her prisoner anyhow for this night. I had once a notion of marryin' her—an' may be—as I am disappointed in the other—

* Ha! you daughter of a prostitute.

but, we'll think of it. Now we're at the horses, an' we'll get an faster."

This was indeed true. After the journey we have just described, they had at length got out of the boreen, where, in the corner of a field, a little to the right, two horses, each saddled, were tied to the branch of a tree. They now made a slight delay until their charge should be got mounted, and were collected in a group on the road, when a voice called out, "Who goes there?"

"A friend to the guard?"

"Good morrow!"

"Good morrow mornin' to you."

"What Age are you in?"

"The end of the fifth."

"All right," said Bartle aloud; "now boys," he whispered to his own party, "we must tell them good-humouredly to pass on—that this is a runaway—jist a girl we're bringin' off wid us, an' to hould a hard cheek* about it. You know we'd do as much for them."

Both parties now met, the strangers consisting of about twenty men.

"Well, boys," said the latter, "what's the fun?"

"Divil a thing but a girl we're helpin' a boy to take away. What's your own sport?"

"Begorra we were in luck to-night; we got as purty a double-barrelled gun as ever you seen, an' a case o' murdherin' fine pistols."

"Success, ould heart! that's right; we'll be able to stand our enemies a tug whin the 'Day' comes."

"Which of you is takin' away the girl, boys?" inquired one of the strangers.

"Begad, Bartle Flanagan, since there's no use in hidin' it when we're all 'up' as we ought to be."

"Bartle Flanagan," said a voice—"Bartle Flanagan, is it? An' who's the girl?"

* To keep it secret.

"Blur an' agers, Alick Nulty, don't be too curious. She comes from Bodagh Buie's."

Biddy, on hearing the voice of her brother, made another violent effort, and succeeded in partially working the gag out of her mouth—she screamed faintly, and struggled with such energy that her hands again became loose, and in an instant the gag was wholly removed.

"Oh, Alick, Alick, for the love o' God save me from Flanagan! it's me, your sister Biddy, that's in it; save me, Alick, or I'll be lost: he has cut me to the bone wid a blow, an' the blood's pourin' from me."

Her brother flew to her. "Whisht, Biddy, don't be afeard," he exclaimed. "Boys," said he, "let my party stand by me; this is the way Bartle Flanagan keeps his oath."*

"Secure Bartle," said Biddy, "he robbed Bodagh Buie's house, an' has the money about him."

The horses were already on the road, but in consequence of both parties filling up the passage in the direction which Bartle and his followers intended taking, the animals could not be brought through them without delay and trouble, even had there been no resistance offered to their progress.

"A robber too!" exclaimed Nulty, "that's more of his parjury to'ards uz. Bartle Flanagan, you're a thraitor, and you'll get a thraitor's death afore you're much ouldher. He's not fit to be among us," added Alick, addressing himself to both parties, "an' the thruth is, if we don't hang or settle him, he'll some day hang us."

"Bartle's no thraitor," said Mulvather, "but he's a thraitor that says he is."

The coming reply was interrupted by "Boys, good night to yez!" and immediately the clatter of a horse's

* One of the clauses of the Ribbon oath was, not to injure or maltreat the wife or sister of a brother Ribbonman.

feet was heard stumbling and floundering back along the deep stoney boreen. "Be the vestments he's off," said one of his party; "the cowardly villin's off wid himself, the minnit he seen the appearance of danger."

"Sure enough, the bad dhrop's in him," exclaimed several on both sides; "but what he manes now I dunna?" "It'll be only a good joke to-morrow wid him," observed one of them—"but, boys, we must think how to manage him; I can't forgive him for the cowardly blow he hot the poor colleen here, an' for the same rason I didn't draw the knot so tight upon her as I could a' done."

"Was it you that nipped my arm?" asked Biddy.

"Faix you may say that, an' it was to let you know that let him say as he would, afther what we seen of him to-night, we wouldn't allow him to thrate you badly—widout marryin' you first."

The night having been now pretty far advanced, the two parties separated in order to go to their respective homes—Alick taking Biddy under his protection to her master's. As the way of many belonging to each lodge lay in the same direction, they were accompanied, of course, to the turn that led up to the Bodagh's house. Biddy, notwithstanding the severe blow she had got, related the night's adventure with much humour, dwelling upon her own part in the transaction with singular glee.

"There's some thraicherous villain in the Bodagh's," said she, "be it man or woman; for what 'ud you think but the hall-door was left lyin' to only—neither locked nor bouted. But indeed, any how, it was the start was taken out o' me whin Ned M'Cormick—that *you* wor to meet in our kitchen, Alick—troth, I won't let *Kitty Lowry* wait up for *you* so long another time"—She added this to throw the onus of the assignation off her own shoulders, and to lay it upon those of Alick and Kitty.—"But any how, I had jist time to throw her clothes upon me and to get into her bed. Be my

sowl but I acted the fright and sickness in style. I wasn't able spake a word, you persave, till we got far enough from the house to give Miss Oona time to hide herself. Oh, thin the robbin' villin, how he put the muzzel of his gun to the lock of Miss Oona's desk, whin he couldn't get the key, an' *blewn* it to pieces, an' thin he took every farden he could lay his hands upon."

She then detailed her own feelings during the abduction, in terms so ludicrously abusive of Flanagan, that those who accompanied her were exceedingly amused; for although what she said was strongly provocative of mirth, yet the chief cause of laughter lay in the vehement sincerity with which she spoke, and in the utter unconsciousness of uttering any thing that was calculated to excite a smile. There is, however, a class of such persons, whose power of provoking laughter consists in the utter absence of humour. Those I speak of never laugh either at what they say themselves, or at what any one else may say; but drive on right a-head with an inverted originality that is perfectly irresistible.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WE must now beg the reader to accompany them to the Bodagh's, where a scene presented itself for which they were scarcely prepared. On approaching the house they could perceive by the light glittering from the window chinks that the family were in a state of alarm; but at this they were not surprised; for such a commotion in the house after what had occurred, was but natural. They went directly to the kitchen door, however, and rapped.

"Who is there?" said a voice within.

"It's Biddy; for the love o' God make haste, Kitty, an' open."

"What Biddy are you? I won't open."

"Biddy Nulty. You know me well enough, Kitty; so make haste an' open. Alick, mark my words," said she, in a low voice to her brother, "Kitty's the very one that practised the desate this night—that left the hall-door open. Make haste, Kitty, I say."

"I'll do no sich thing indeed," replied the other; "it was you left the hall-door open to night, an' I hear you spakin' to fellows outside. I have too much regard for my masther's house an' family to let you or any one else in to-night. Come in the mornin'."

"Folly me, Alick," said Biddy, "folly me."

She went immediately to the hall-door, and gave such a single rap with the knocker as brought more than Kitty to the spot.

"Who's there?" inquired a voice which she and her brother at once knew to be Ned M'Cormick's.

"Ned, for the love o' God let me an' Alick in," she replied; "we got away from the netarnal villin."

Instantly the door was opened, and the first thing Ned did was to put his arms about Biddy's neck and—we were going to say kiss her.

"Saints above," said he, "what's this?" on seeing that her face was dreadfully disfigured with blood.

"Nothing to signify," she replied; "but thanks be to God we got clane away from the villin; or be the Paudheren Partha, the villin it was that got clane away from huz. How is Miss Oona?"

"She went over to a neighbour's house for safety," replied Ned smiling, "an' will be back in a few minutes: but who do you think, above all men in the five quarthers o' the earth, we have got widin? Guess now."

"Who?" said Biddy; "why, I dunna, sure—but no, it couldn't."

"Faix, but it could though," said Ned, mistaking her as the matter turned out.

"Why, *vick na hoiah, no!* Connor O'Donovan back! Oh! no, no, Ned; that 'ud be too good news to be throe."

The honest lad shook his head with an expression of regret that could not be mistaken as the exponent of a sterling heart. And yet, that the reader may perceive how near a-kin the one circumstance was to the other in his mind, we have only to say, that whilst the regret for Connor was deeply engraven on his features, yet the expression of triumph was as clearly legible as if his name had not been at all mentioned.

"Who then, Ned?" said Alick; "who the dickens is it?"

"Why, divil resave the other than Bartle Flanagan himself—*secured*—and the constables sent for—an' plase the Savier he'll be in the stone jug afore his head gets grey anyhow, the black hearted villin."

It was even so; the circumstances accounting for it are very simple. Flanagan having mounted one of the horses, made the best of his way from what he apprehended was likely to become a scene of deadly strife. Such was the nature of the road, however, that any thing like a rapid pace was out of the question. When he had got over about half the boreen he was accosted

in the significant terms of the Ribbon pass-word of that day.

“Good morrow.”

“Good morrow mornin’ to you.”

“Arrah, what Age may you be, neighbour?”

Now the correct words were, “What Age are we in?” but they were often slightly changed, sometimes through ignorance, and sometimes from design, as in the latter case less liable to remark when addressed to persons not up. “In the end of the Fifth,” was the reply.

“An’ if you wor shakin’ hands wid a friend how would you do it? Or stay—all’s right so far—but give us a grip of your *lham dhas* (right hand).”

Flanagan, who apprehended pursuit, was too cautious to trust himself within reach of any one coming from the direction in which the Bodagh lived. He made no reply, therefore, to this, but urged his horse forward, and attempted to get clear of his catechist.

“*Dhar Dhea!* it’s Flanagan,” said a voice, which was that of Ned M’Cormick; and the next moment the equestrian was stretched in the mud, by a heavy blow from the butt of a carbine. Nearly a score of men were immediately about him; for the party he met on his return were the Bodagh’s son, his servants, and such of the cottiers as lived near enough to be called up to the rescue. On finding himself secured, he lost all presence of mind, and almost all consciousness of his situation.

“I’m gone,” said he; “I’m a lost man; all Europe can’t save my life. Don’t kill me, boys; don’t kill me; I’ll go wid yez quietly—only if I am to die, let me die by the laws of the land.”

“The laws of the land!” said John O’Brien; “Oh, little, Bartle Flanagan, you respected them. You needn’t be alarmed now—you are safe here—to the laws of the land we will leave you; and by them you must stand or fall.”

Bartle Flanagan, we need scarcely say, was well guarded until a posse of constables should arrive to take

him into custody. But in the mean time a large, and increasing party sat up in the house of the worthy Bodagh; for the neighbours had been alarmed and came flocking to his aid. 'Tis true, the danger was now over; but the kind Bodagh, thankful in his heart to the Almighty for the escape of his daughter, would not let them go without first partaking of his hospitality. His wife, too, for the same reason, was in a flutter of delight; and as her heart was as Irish as her husband's, and consequently as hospitable, so did she stir about and work, and order right and left until abundant refreshments were smoking on the table. Nor was the gentle and melancholy Una herself, now that the snake was at all events scotched, averse to show herself among them—for so they would have it. Biddy Nulty had washed her face; and notwithstanding the poultice of stirabout which her mistress with her own hands applied to her wound, she really was the most interesting person present, in consequence of her heroism during the recent outrage. After a glass of punch had gone round, she waxed inveterately eloquent, indeed so much so that the mourner, the *colleen dhas dhun*, herself was more than once forced to smile, and in some instances fairly to laugh at the odd grotesque spirit of her descriptions.

"The rascal was quick," said the Bodagh; "but upon my credit, Biddy, you were a pop afore him for all that. Divil a thing I, or John, or the others could do wid only one gun an' a case o' pistols against so many—still we would have fought life or death for poor Una, any how. But, Biddy here, good girl, by her cleverness and invintion saved us the danger, an' maybe was the manes of savin' some of our lives or their's. God knows I'd have no relish to be shot myself," said the pacific Bodagh, "nor would I ever have a day or night's pace if I had the blood of a fellow-crathur on my sowl—upon my sowl I wouldn't."

"But, blood alive, masther, what could I 'a done only for Ned M'Cormick, that gave us the hard word?"

said Biddy, anxious to transfer the merit of the transaction to her lover.

"Well, well, Bid," replied the Bodagh, "maybe neither Ned nor yourself will be a loser by it. If you're bint on layin' your heads together, we'll find you a weddin' present, any way."

"Bedad, sir, I'm puzzled to know how they got in so aisy," said Ned.

"That matter remains to be cleared up yet" said John. "There is certainly treachery in the camp, somewhere."

"I am cock sure the hall door was not latched," said Duffy; "for they had neither stop nor stay at it."

"There is a villing among us sartinly," observed Mrs. O'Brien; "for as Heaving is above me, I locked it wid my own two hands this blessed night."

"I thought it might be wid the kay, Bridget," said the Bodagh, laughing at his own easy joke; "for you see doors is ginerally locked wid kays—ha! ha! ha!"

"Faix, but had Oona been tuck away to-night wid that vag o' the world, it's not laughin' you'd be."

"God he sees, that's only thruth, too, Bridget," he replied; "but still there's some rogue about the place that opened the door for the villins."

"*Dar ma chuirp*, I'll hould goold I'll put the saddle on the right horse in no time," said Biddy. "Misthress, will you call Kitty Lowry, ma'am, i' you plase; I'll do every thing above boord; no behind backs for me; blazes to the one alive hates foul play more nor I do."

We ought to have observed that one of Biddy's peculiarities was a more than usual readiness at letting fly, and not unfrequently at coining, an oath; and as her character presented a strange compound of simplicity and cleverness, honesty and adroitness, her master and mistress, and fellow-servants were frequently amused by this unfeminine propensity. For instance, if Una happened to ask her, "Biddy, did you iron the linen?"

Her usual reply was "No, blast the iron, miss, I hadn't time." Of course the family did every thing in their power to discourage such a practice; but on this point they found it impossible to reform her. Kitty Lowry's countenance, when she appeared, certainly presented strong indications of her guilt; but still there was a hardness of outline about it which gave promise at the same time of the most intrepid assurance. Biddy, on the other hand, was brimful of consequence; and a sense of authority on finding that the judicial power was on this occasion entrusted chiefly to her hands. She rose up when Kitty entered, and stuck a pair of red formidable fists with great energy into her sides.

"Pray, ma'am," said she, "what's the *raison* you refused to let me in to-night, afther gettin away wid my life from that netarnal blackguard, Bartle Flanagan—what's the *raison*, I say, ma'am, that you kep me out after you *knewn* who was in it?"

There was here visible a slight vibration of the head, rather gentle at the beginning, but clearly prophetic of ultimate energy, and an unequivocal determination to enforce whatever she might say with suitable action, even in its widest sense.

"An' pray, ma'am," said the other—for however paradoxical it may appear—it is an established case that in all such displays between women, politeness usually keeps pace with scurrility;—"an' pray, ma'am," replied Kitty, "is it to the likes o' you we're to say our catechiz?"

Biddy was resolved not to be outdone in politeness, and replied—

"Af you plase, ma'am," with a court'sy.

"Lord project us! what will we hear next I wonder! Well, ma'am?" Here her antagonist stood evidently waiting for the onset.

"You'll hear more than 'll go down your back pleasant afore I've done wid you, ma'am."

"Don't be makin' us long for it in the mane time, Miss Biddy."

"You didn't answer my question, *Miss Kitty*. Why did you refuse to let me in to-night?"

"For good raisons—bekase I hard you collogin' an' whisperin' wid a pack o' fellows 'ithout."

"An' have you the brass to say so, knowin' that it's false, an' a lie into the bargain?" (Head energetically shaken.)

"Have I the brass, is it? I keep my brass in my pocket, ma'am, not in my face, like some of my friends." (Head shaken in reply to the action displayed by Biddy.)

This was a sharp retort; but it was very well returned.

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Biddy, if it's faces you're spakin about, I know you're able to outface me any day; but whatever's in my face, there's no desate in my heart, Miss Lowry. Put that in your pocket." (One triumphant shake of the head at the conclusion.)

"There's as much in your heart as 'ill shame your face yet, Miss Nulty. Put that in yours." (Another triumphant shake of the head in return.)

"Thank God," retorted Biddy, "none o' *my* friends ever knewn what a shamed face is. I say, madam, none o' *my* family iver wore a shamed face. *Thigun thu shin?*" (Do you understand that?)

This, indeed, was a bitter hit; for the reader must know that a sister of Lowry's had not passed through the world without the breath of slander tarnishing her fair fame.

"Oh, it's well known your tongue's no scandal, Biddy."

"Thin that's more than can be sed o' yours, Kitty."

"If my shisther met wid a misfortune, it was many a betther woman's case than ever you'll be. Don't shout till you get out o' the wood, ma'am. You dunna what's afore yourself. Any how it's not by lettin'

fellows into the masther's kitchen whin the family's in bed, an' dhrinkin' whiskey wid them, that'll get through the world wid your character safe. * * * An' you're nothin' but a barge, or you'd not dhrav down my shisther's name that never did you an ill turn, whatever she did to herself, poor girl!"

"An' do you dar' to call me a barge? * * * Blast your insurance! be this an' be that for a farden I'd malivogue the devil out o' you."

"We're not puttin' it past you, madam; you're blaggard enough to fight like a man; but we're not goin' to make a blaggard an' a bully of ourselves, in the mane time."

The conversation of which we are giving a very imperfect report, was garnished by both ladies with sundry vituperative epithets, which it would be inconsistent with the dignity of our history to record.

"That's bekase you haven't the blood of a hen in you * * * sure we may know what you are! But howld! be me sowl, you're *doin'* me for all that. Ah, ha! I see where you're ladin' me; but it won't do, Miss Kitty Lowry. I'll bring you back to the catechiz agin. You'd light the sthraw to get away in the smoke; but you're worth two gone people yet, dthough."

"Worth half a dozen o' you, any day."

"Well, as we're both to the fore, we'll soon see that. How did you know, my lady, that the masther's hall-door was left open to-night?—Answer me that, on the nail!"

This was what might be very properly called a knockdown blow; for if the reader but reflects a moment he will see that Kitty, on taxing her antagonist after her rescue, with leaving it open, directly betrayed herself, as there was and could have been no one in the house cognizant of the fact at the time, unless the guilty person. With this latter exception, Dandy Duffy was the only individual aware of it, and from whom the

knowledge of it could come. Kitty, therefore, by her over anxiety to exculpate herself from a charge which had not been made, became the unconscious instrument of disclosing the fact of her having betrayed trust.

This trying query, coming upon her unexpectedly as it did, threw her into palpable confusion. Her face became at once suffused with a deep scarlet hue, occasioned by mingled shame and resentment, as was quite evident from the malignant and fiery glare which she turned upon her querist.

"Get out," she replied; "do you think I'd think it worth my while to answer the likes o' you? I'd see you farder than I could look first. You, indeed! faugh! musha bad luck to your impidence!"

"Oh, i' you plaise, ma'am," said Biddy, dropping a courtsey, that might be well termed the very pink of politeness—"we hope you'll show yourself a betther Christhin than to be ignorant o' your catechiz. So, ma'am, if it 'ud be plaisin' to you afore the company, maybe you'd answer it."

"Who made you my misthress, you blaggard flipe? who gave you authority to ax me sich questins?" replied the other. "A fellow sarvant like myself! to the divil I pitch you. You, indeed! Faix, it's well come up wid the likes o' you to ballyrag over me!"

"Well, but, ma'am dear, will you answer—that is i' you plase, for sure we can't forget our manners, you know—will you jist answer what I axed you? Oh, be me sowl, your face condimns you, my lady," said Biddy, abruptly changing her tone; "it does, you yolla Mullotty, it does. You bethrayed the mather's house, an' Miss Oona, too, you villin o' blazes. If you could see your face now—your guilty face!"

The spirit of her antagonist, being that of a woman, could bear no more. The last words were scarcely uttered, when Lowry made a spring like a tigress at her opponent, who, however, received this onset with a skill and intrepidity worthy of Penthesilea herself. They

were immediately separated, but not until they had twisted and twined about one another two or three times, after which, each displayed, by way of trophy, a copious handful of hair that had changed proprietorship during their brief but energetic conflict. In addition to this, there were visible on Kitty's face, five small streams of liquid gore, which, no doubt, would have been found to correspond with the red expanded talons of her antagonist.

John O'Brien then put the question seriously to Lowry, who, now that her blood was up, or probably feeling that she had betrayed herself, declined to answer at all.

"I'll answer nottin' I don't like," she replied; "an' I'll not be ballyragged by any one—not even by you, Misther John: an' what's more, I'll lave the sarvice at the skriek o' day to-morrow. I would'nt live in the house wid that one; my life 'udn't be safe undher the wan roof wid her."

"Thin you'll get no correchter from any one here," said Mrs. O'Brien; "for indeed any way, there was never a minute's pace in the kitching since you came into it."

"Divil cares," she replied, with a toss of her head; "if I don't, I must only live widout it, and will, I hope."

She then flounced out of the room, and kept grumbling in an insolent tone of voice, until she got to her bed. Dandy Duffy then detailed all the circumstances he had witnessed, by which it appeared unquestionable that Kitty Lowry had been aware of Flanagan's design, and was consequently one of his accomplices. This in one sense was true, whilst in another and the worst they did her injustice. It is true that Bartle Flanagan pretended affection for her, and contrived on many occasions within the preceding five months, that several secret meetings should take place between them, and almost always upon a Sunday, which was the only day she had any opportunity of seeing him. He had no notion, however, of entrusting her with his secret. In fact, no

man could possibly lay his plans with deeper design or more ingenious precaution for his own safety, than Flanagan. Having gained a promise from the credulous girl to elope with him on the night in question, he easily induced her to leave the hall door open. His exploit, however, having turned out so different in its issue from that which Kitty expected, she felt both chagrined and confounded, and knew not at first whether to ascribe the abduction of Bidly Nulty to mistake or design; for, indeed, she was not ignorant of Flanagan's treacherous conduct to the sex—no female having ever repulsed him, whose character he did not injure whenever he could do so with safety. Bidly's return, however, satisfied her that Bartle must have made a blunder of some kind, or he would not have taken away her fellow-servant instead of herself; and it was the bitterness which weak minds always feel when their own wishes happen to be disappointed, that prompted her resentment against poor Bidly, who was unconsciously its object. Flanagan's primary intention was still, however, in some degree effected, so far as regarded the abduction. The short space of an hour gave him time to cool and collect himself sufficiently to form the best mode of action under the circumstances. He resolved, therefore, to plead mistake, and to produce Kitty Lowry to prove that his visit that night to the Bodagh's house was merely to fulfil their mutual promise of eloping together.

But there was the robbery staring him in the face; and how was he to manage that? This, indeed, was the point on which the accomplished villain felt, by the sinking of his heart, that he had overshot his mark. When he looked closely into it, his whole frame became cold and feeble from despair, the hard paleness of mental suffering settled upon his face, and his brain was stunned by a stupor which almost destroyed the power of thinking.

All this, however, availed him not. Before twelve

o'clock the next day informations had been sworn against him, and at the hour of three, he found himself in the very room which had been assigned to Connor O'Donovan, sinking under a double charge of abduction and robbery.

And now once more did the mutability of public feeling and opinion become apparent. No sooner had fame spread abroad the report of Flanagan's two-fold crime, and his imprisonment, than those very people who had only a day or two before inferred that Connor O'Donovan was guilty, because his accuser's conduct continued correct and blameless, now changed their tone, and insisted that the hand of God was visible in Flanagan's punishment. Again were all the dark traits of his character dragged forward and exposed; and this man reminded that man, as that man did some other man, that he had said more than once that Bartle Flanagan would be hanged for swearing away an innocent young man's life. Such, however, without reference to truth or justice, is public opinion among the great body of the people, who are swayed by their feelings only instead of their judgment. The lower public will, as a matter of course, feel at random upon every thing, and, like a fortune-teller, it will for that reason, and for that only, sometimes be found on the right side. From the time which elapsed between the period of Bartle's imprisonment and that of his trial, many strange circumstances occurred in connexion with it, of which the public at large were completely ignorant. Bartle was now at the mercy of a man who was looked upon with a spirit of detestation and vengeance by those illegal confederacies with which he had uniformly declined to associate himself. Flanagan's party, therefore, had now only two methods of serving him, one was intimidation, and the other a general subscription among the various lodges of the district, to raise funds for his defence. To both of these means they were resolved to have recourse.

Many private meetings they held among themselves upon those important matters, at which Dandy Duffy and Ned M'Cormick attended, as was their duty; and well was it for them that the part they took in defeating Bartle Flanagan, and serving the Bodagh and his family, was unknown to their confederates. To detail the proceedings of their meetings, and recount the savage and vindictive ferocity of such men, would be paying the taste and humanity of our readers a bad compliment. It is enough to say that a fund was raised for Flanagan's defence, and a threatening notice written to be posted on Bodagh Buie's door—of which elegant production the following is a literal copy:—

“BUDDAH BEE—You 'ave wan iv our boys in—for abjection an' rubbry—an' it seems is resolved to parsequite the poor boy at the nuxt 'Shizers—now dhis is be way av a dalikit hint to yew an' yoors that af butt wan spudh av his blud is spiled in quensequence av yewr parsequtn im as the winthers' comin' on an' the wether gettin cowl'd an' the long knights settin' in yew may as well prepare yewr coughin an' not that same remimber you've a praty dother an' may no more about her afore your much oulder.

“SIMON PETHER STARLIGHT.”

This and several others of the same class were served upon the Bodagh, with the intention of intimidating him from the prosecution of Flanagan. They had, however, quite mistaken their man. The Bodagh, though peaceable and placable, had not one atom of the coward in his whole composition. On the contrary, he was not only resolute in resisting what he conceived to be oppressive or unjust, but he was also immoveably obstinate in any thing wherein he fancied he had right on his side. And even had his disposition been inclined to timidity or pliancy, his son John would have used all his influence to induce him to resist a system which is equally opposed to the laws of God and of man, as well as to the temporal

happiness of those who are slaves to the terrible power which, like a familiar devil, it exercises over its victims, under the hollow promise of protection.

As the Bodagh and his son took the usual legal steps to forward the prosecution, it was but natural that they should calculate upon the evidence of Dandy Duffy, Ned M'Cormick, and Alick Nulty. John O'Brien accordingly informed them on the very night of the outrage, that his father and himself would consider them as strong evidences against Bartle Flanagan, and call upon them as such. This information placed these young men in a position of incredible difficulty and danger. They knew not exactly at that moment how to proceed, consistently with the duty which they owed to society at large, and that which was expected from them by the dark combination to which they were united. M'Cormick, however, begged of John O'Brien not to mention their names until the day after the next, and told him that if he could understand their reason for this request, he would not hesitate to comply with it.

O'Brien, who suspected the true cause of their reluctance, did not on this occasion press them farther, but consented to their wishes, and promised not to mention their names as even indirectly connected with the outrage, until the time they had specified had elapsed.

In the course of the following day Nogher M'Cormick presented himself to the Bodagh and his son, neither of whom felt much difficulty in divining the cause of his visit.

"Well," said Nogher, after the first usual civilities had passed, "glory be to God, gentlemen, this is desperate fine weather for the saison—barrin' the wet."

John smiled, but the plain matter-of-fact Bodagh replied,

"Why, how the devil can you call this good weather, neighbour, when it's raining for the last week, night and day!"

"I do call it good weather for all that," returned

Nogher, "for you ought to know that every weather is good that God sends."

"Well," said the Bodagh, taken aback a little by Nogher's piety, "there's truth in that too. You are right, neighbour."

"I *am* right," said Nogher, "an' it's nothin' else than a sinful word to say that this is bad weather, or that that's bad weather—bekase, as the Scripthur says, 'vo be to the man that's——'"

"But pray," interrupted John, "what's your business with my father and me?"

Nogher rubbed down his chin very gravely and significantly.

"Why," said he, "somethin' for your own good, gintlemin."

"Well, what is that?" said John, anxious to bring him to the point as soon as possible.

"The truth, gintlemin, is this. I am an ould man, an' I hope that I never was found to be any thing else than an honest one. They're far away this day that could give me a good carrecthur; two o' them, any how I'll never forget—Connor an' his mother; but I'll never see them agin; and the ould man too, I never could hate him, in regard of the love he bore his son. Long, long was the journey he tuck to see that son, an', as he tould me the day he wint into the ship, to die in his boy's arms; for he said Heaven would'nt be heaven to him if he died any where else."

Nogher's eyes filled as he spoke, and we need scarcely say that neither the Bodagh nor his son esteemed him the less for his attachment to Connor O'Donovan and his family.

"The sooner I end the business I came about to-day," said he, "the better. You want my son Ned, Dandy Duffy, an' Alic Nulty, to join in giving evidence against blaggard Bartle Flanagan. Now, the truth is, gintlemen, you don't know the state of things in the country. If they come into a coort o' justice against him, their

lives won't be worth a traneeen. It's aginst their oath, I'm tould, as Ribbonmen, to prosecute one another ; and from hints I resaved, I'm afeard they can't do it, as I said, barrin' at the risk o' their lives."

"Father," said John, "as far as I've heard, he speaks nothing but truth."

"I believe he does too," rejoined the Bodagh, "an' by my sowl I'll be bound he's an honest man—upon my credit I think you are, M'Cormick."

"I am thankful to you, sir," said Nogher.

"I'm inclined to think further," said John, "that we have proof enough against Flanagan without them."

"Thin if you think so, John, God forbid that we'd be the manes of bringin' the young men into throuble. All I'm sorry for is, that they allowed themselves to be hooked into sich a dark and murtherin' piece of villany."

"I know, sir, it's a bad business," said Nogher, "but it can't be helped now ; no man's safe that won't join it."

"Faith an' I won't for one," replied the Bodagh, "not but they sent many a threat to me. Anything against the laws o' the counthry is bad, and never ends but in harm to them that's consarned in it."

"God forbid," further observed his son, "that ever the day should come when this cowardly practice of murder should shape itself into a system at variance with religion, liberty, and true courage. Assassination is the crime only of slaves and cowards. That day will be an unhappy day to the loyal Catholic and the loyal Protestant who may wish to rest contented under those laws which are adequate to their protection, if firmly and impartially administered. M'Cormick," added the son, "villain as Flanagan is, we shall let him once more loose upon society, sooner than bring the lives of your son and the two other young men into jeopardy. Such, unhappily is the state of the country, and we must submit to it."

"I thank you sir," said Nogher. "The truth is,

they're sworn, it seems, *not* to prosecute one another, let whatever may happen; an' any one of them that breaks *that* oath—God knows I wish they'd think of *other* oaths as much as they do of it—barrin' a stag that's taken up, an' kep' safe by the government, is sure to get his wages well ped."

"Say no more, M'Cormick," said the Bodagh's inestimable son, "say no more. No matter how this may terminate, we shall not call on them as evidences. It must be so, father," he added, "and God help the country in which the poor are neglected, and the passions and prejudices of ignorant and mistaken men become the active principles which impress their vindictive horrors upon society. Although not myself connected with these men, I know their oath, and—but I say no more. M'Cormick, your friends are safe; we shall not, as I told you, call upon them, be the result what it may; better that ten guilty should escape, than that one innocent person should suffer."

Nogher again thanked him, and having taken up his hat, was about to retire, when he paused a moment, and, after some consideration with himself, said—addressing the son—

"You're a scholar, sir, an'—but maybe I'm sayin' what I oughtn't to say—but sure, God knows, it's all very well known long ago."

"What is it, M'Cormick?" asked John, "speak out plainly; we will not feel offended."

"'Twas only this, sir," continued Nogher, "I'm an unlearned man; but *he* would write to *you*, maybe—I mane Connor—an' if he did, I'd be glad to hear—but I hope I don't offend you, sir. You wouldn't think of me, may be, although many and many's the time I nursed him on these knees, an' carried him about in these arms, and he cried—ay, as God is my judge, he cried bitterly—when, as he said, at the time—'Nogher, Nogher, my affectionate friend, I'll never see you more.'"

John O'Brien shook him cordially by the hand, and replied—"I will make it a point to let you know any thing that our family may hear from him."

"An' if you write to him, sir, jist in a single line,—to say that the affectionate ould friend never forgot him."

"That, too, shall be done," replied John—"you may rest assured of it."

The Bodagh, whose notions in matters of delicacy and feeling were rough but honest, now rang the bell with an uncommon, nay, an angry degree of violence.

"Get up some spirits here, an' don't be asleep. You must take a glass of whiskey before you go," he said, addressing Nogher.

"Sir, replied Nogher, "I'm in a hurry home, for I'm off o' my day's work."

"By the hand of my body but you must," rejoined the Bodagh, "and what's your day's wages?"

"Ten pence."

"There's half-a-crown; an' I tell you more, you must come and take a *cot-tack* undher me, and you'll find the change for the betther, never fear."

In point of fact it was so concluded, and Nogher left the Bodagh's house with a heart thankful to Providence that he had ever entered it.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE day of Flanagan's trial, however, now approached, and our readers are fully aware of the many chances of escaping justice which the existence of Ribbonism in the country opened to him, notwithstanding his villany. As some one, however, says in a play—in that of *Othello*, we believe—"God is above all," so might Flanagan have said on this occasion. The evidence of Biddy Nulty, of some of the other servants, and of the Bodagh, who identified several of the bank notes, was quite sufficient against him, with respect to the robbery. Nor was any evidence adduced of more circumstantial weight than Kitty Lowry's, who, on being satisfied of Flanagan's designs against Una, and that she herself was consequently no more than his dupe, openly acknowledged the part she had taken in the occurrences of the night on which the outrages were committed. This confession agreed so well with Bartle's character for caution and skill in every thing he undertook, that his object in persuading her to leave the hall-door open was not only clear, but perfectly consistent with the other parts of his plan. His crime was a capital one; and when fame once more had proclaimed abroad that Bartle Flanagan was condemned to be hanged for robbing Bodagh Buie, they insisted still more strongly that the sentence was an undeniable instance of retributive justice.

Striking indeed was the difference between his deportment during the trial, and the manly fortitude of Connor O'Donovan, when standing under as heavy a charge at the same bar. The moment he entered the dock, it was observed that his face expressed all the pusillanimous symptoms of the most unmanly terror. His brows fell, or rather hung over his eyes, as if all their muscular power had been lost—giving to his countenance not only

the vague sullenness of irresolute ferocity, but also, as was legible in his dead small eye, the cold calculations of deep and cautious treachery ; nor was his white haggard cheek a less equivocal assurance of his consummate cowardice. Many eyes were now turned upon him ; for we need scarcely say that his part in a case, which created so much romantic interest as the conviction of Connor O'Donovan, and the history it developed of the mutual affection which subsisted between him and Una, were by no means forgotten. And even if they had, his present appearance and position would, by the force of ordinary association, have revived them in the minds of many then present.

Deprived of all moral firmness, as he appeared to be, on entering the dock, yet as the trial advanced, it was evident that his heart and spirits were sinking still more and more, until at length his face, in consequence of its ghastliness, and the involuntary hanging of his eye-brows, indicated scarcely any other expression than that of utter helplessness, or the feeble agony of a mind so miserably prostrated, as to be hardly conscious of the circumstances around him. This was clearly obvious when the verdict of "guilty" was uttered in the dead silence which prevailed through the court. No sooner were the words pronounced than he looked about him wildly and exclaimed—

"What's that? what's that? Oh, God!—sweet Jasus!—sweet Jasus!"

His lips then moved for a little, and he was observed to mark his breast privately with the sign of the cross ; but in such a manner as to prove that the act was dictated by the unsettled incoherency of superstitious terror, and not by the promptings of piety or religion.

The judge now put on the black cap, and was about to pronounce the fatal sentence, when the prisoner shrieked out, "Oh, my Lord—my Lord, spare me. Oh, spare me, for I'm not fit to die. I daren't meet God."

"Alas!" exclaimed the judge, "unhappy man, it is too

often true, that those who are least prepared to meet their Almighty Judge, are also the most reckless in the perpetration of those crimes which are certain, ere long, to hurry them into his presence. You find now, that whether as regards this life or the next, he who observes the laws of his religion and his country, is the only man who can be considered, in the true sense of the word, his own friend; and there is this advantage in his conduct, that whilst he is the best friend to himself, it *necessarily* follows, that he must be a benefactor in the same degree to society at large. To such a man the laws are a security, and not, as in your case, and in that of those who resemble you, a punishment. It is the wicked only who hate the laws, because they are conscious of having provoked their justice. In asking me to spare your life, you are aware that you ask me for that which I cannot grant. There is nothing at all in your case to entitle you to mercy; and if by the life you have led, you feel that you are unfit to die, it is clear upon your own principles, and by the use you have made of life, that you are unfit to live."

He then proceeded to exhort him in the usual terms, to sue for reconciliation with an offended God, through the merits and sufferings of Christ. After which he sentenced him to be executed on the fifth day from the close of the assizes. On hearing the last words of the judge he clutched the dock at which he stood with a convulsive effort;—his hands and arms, however, became the next moment relaxed, and he sank down in a state of helpless insensibility. On reviving he found himself in his cell, attended by two of the turnkeys, who felt now more alarmed at his screams and the horror which was painted on his face, than by the fainting fit from which he had just recovered. It is not our design to dwell at much length upon the last minutes of such a man; but we will state briefly, that, as might be expected, he left nothing unattempted to save his own life. On the day after his trial, he sent

for the sheriff, and told him that, provided life were granted him by the government, he could make many important disclosures, and give very valuable information concerning the state and prospects of Ribbonism in the country, together with a long list of the persons who were attached to it in that parish. The sheriff told him that this information, which might under other circumstances have been deemed of much value by government, had already been anticipated by another man, during the very short period that elapsed since his conviction. There was nothing which he could now disclose, the sheriff added, that he himself was not already in possession of, even to the rank which he, Flanagan, was invested with among them, and the very place where he and they had held their last meeting. But, independently of that, he proceeded, it is not usual for government to pardon the principals in any such outrage as that for which you have been convicted. I shall, however, transmit your proposal to the chief secretary, who may act in the matter as he thinks proper.

In the meantime his relatives and confederates were not idle outside, each party having already transmitted a petition to Dublin Castle in his behalf. That of his relations contained only the usual melancholy sentiments, and earnest entreaties for mercy which are to be found in such documents. The memorial, however, of his confederates was equally remarkable for its perverted ingenuity, and those unlucky falsehoods which are generally certain to defeat the objects of those who have recourse to them.

It went to say, "That petitioners feared very much that the country was in a dangerous state in consequence of the progressive march of Ribbonism in part of that parish, and in many of the surrounding districts. That the unhappy prisoner had for sometime past made himself peculiarly obnoxious to this illegal class of persons; and that he was known in the country as what is termed '*a marked man*,' ever since he had the courage to

prosecute, some time ago, one of their most notorious leaders, by name Connor O'Donovan, of Lisnamona; who was, at the period of writing that memorial, a convict during life in New South Wales for a capital Whiteboy offence.

"That said Connor O'Donovan, having seduced the affections of a young woman named Una O'Brien, daughter of a man called Michael O'Brien, otherwise Bodagh Buie, or the Yellow Churl, demanded her in marriage from her father and family, who unanimously rejected his pretensions. Upon which, instigated by the example and practice of the dark combination of which he was so distinguished a leader, he persuaded memorialist, partly by entreaties, but principally by awful and mysterious threats, to join him in the commission of this most atrocious crime. That from the moment he had been forced into the participation of such an act, his conscience could not permit him to rest night or day; and he consequently came forward boldly and fearlessly, and did what he considered his duty to God and his country.

"That in consequence of this conscientious act, O'Donovan, the Ribbon ringleader, was capitally convicted; but through the interest of some leading gentlemen of the parish, who were ignorant of his habits and connections, the sentence was, by the mercy of government, commuted to transportation for life.

"That upon his banishment from the country, the girl whose affections he had seduced, became deranged for some time; but after her recovery, expressed, on many occasions, the most bitter determination to revenge upon petitioner the banishment of her lover; and that the principal evidence upon which petitioner was convicted, was hers* and that of a girl named Bridget

* This was a falsehood, inasmuch as Una, having been concealed in another room, could give and did give no evidence that in any way affected Flanagan's life.

Nulty, formerly a servant in his father's house, and known to have been O'Donovan's paramour.

"That this girl, Bridget Nulty, was taken into O'Brien's family at the suggestion of his daughter Una, who was ignorant of her guilt; and that she and Bridget Nulty, aided by another female servant of O'Brien's, named Kitty Lowry, formed the conspiracy of which petitioner is unhappily the victim."

It then proceeded to detail how the conspiracy which Una O'Brien and the two females she had taken in as accomplices, was carried into effect; all of which was done with singular tact and ingenuity; every circumstance being made to bear a character and design diametrically opposed to the truth. It concluded by stating "that great exultation had been manifested by the Ribbonmen of that parish, who, on the night of petitioner's conviction lit bonfires in several parts of the neighbourhood, fired shots, sounded horns, and displayed other symptoms of great rejoicing; and hoped his Excellency would, therefore, interpose his high prerogative, and prevent petitioner from falling a sacrifice to a conspiracy on the one hand, and the resentment of a traitorous confederacy on the other; and all this only for having conscientiously and firmly served the government of the country.

Our readers need not be surprised at the ingenuity of this plausible petition, for the truth is that before government supported any system of education at all in Ireland, the old hedge schoolmasters were almost to a man, office-bearers and leaders in this detestable system. Such men, and those also who were designed for the priesthood, with here and there an occasional poor scholar, were uniformly the petition writers, and indeed, the general scribes of the little world in which they lived. In fact, we have abundance of public evidence to satisfy us, that persons of considerable literary attainments have been connected with Ribbonism in all its stages.

This fine writing, however, was unfortunately counteracted in consequence of the information already laid before the sheriff by no less a personage than Rousin Redhead, who, fearing alike the treachery and enmity of his leader, resolved thus to neutralize any disclosures Flanagan should happen to make. But lest this might not have been sufficient to exhibit the character of that document, the proposal of Bartle himself to make disclosures was transmitted to the secretary of state by the same post; so that both the conflicting statements reached that gentleman, *pari passu*, to his no small astonishment.

Had Flanagan's confederates consulted him, he would of course have dissuaded them from sending any petition at all, or at least, only such as he could approve of, but such is the hollowness of this bond, and so little confidence is placed in its obligation, that when any of its victims happens to find himself in a predicament similar to Flanagan's, his companions without lead such a life of terror, and suspicion, and doubt, as it would be difficult to describe. But when, as in Bartle's case, there exists a strong distrust in his firmness and honesty, scarcely one can be found hardy enough to hold any communication with him. This easily and truly accounts for the fact of their having got the petition written and sent to government in his name. The consequence was, that his own communication gave the lie to theirs, and on the day previous to that named for his execution, his death-warrant reached the sheriff, who lost no time in apprizing him of his unhappy fate.

This was a trying task to that humane and amiable gentleman, who had already heard of the unutterable tortures which the criminal suffered from the horror of approaching death, and the dread of eternity; for neither by penitence nor even remorse, was he in the slightest degree moved.

"To die!" said he, staggering back; "to be in eternity to-morrow; to have to face God before twelve

o'clock! tarrible! tarrible! tarrible! Can no one save me? To die to-morrow!—tarrible!—tarrible!—Oh that I could sink into the earth! that the ground 'ud swally me!"

The sheriff advised him to be a man, and told him to turn to God, who, if he repented, would in no wise cast him out. "Act," said he, "as O'Donovan did, whom you yourself prosecuted, and placed in the very cell in which you now stand."

"Connor O'Donovan," he exclaimed, "*he* might well bear to die; *he* was innocent, *it was I that burned Bodagh Buie's haggard*; he had neither act nor part in it no more than the child unborn. I swore away his life out of revinge to his father, an' jealousy of himself about Una O'Brien. Oh, if I had as little to answer for now as he, I could die—die! Sweet Jasus, an' must I die to-morrow—be in the flames of hell afore twelve o'clock! tarrible! tarrible!"

It was absolutely, to use his own word, "terrible" to witness the almost superhuman energy of his weakness. On making this last disclosure to the sheriff, the latter stepped back from a feeling of involuntary surprise and aversion, exclaiming as he did it,

"Oh God forgive you, unhappy and guilty man! you have much, indeed, to answer for; and, as I said before, I advise you to make the most of the short time that is allotted to you, in repenting and seeking pardon from God."

The culprit heard him not, however, for his whole soul was fearfully absorbed in the contemplation of eternity, and punishment, and death.

"Sir," said the turnkey, "that's the way he's runnin' about the room almost since his thrial; not, to be sure, altogether so bad as now, but clappin' his hands, an' screamin', an' groanin', that it's frightful to listen to him. An' his dhramas, sir, is worse. God! sir, if you'd hear him asleep, the hair would stand on your head; indeed, one of us is ordered to be always with him."

"It is right," replied the sheriff, who, after recommending him to get a clergyman, left him, and with his usual promptness and decision, immediately wrote to the Secretary of state, acquainting him with Flanagan's confession of his own guilt, and Connor O'Donovan's innocence of the burning of O'Brien's haggard; hoping at the same time, that government would take instant steps to restore O'Donovan to his country and his friends.

Soon after the sheriff left him, a Roman Catholic clergyman arrived, for it appeared that against the priest who was chaplain to the jail, he had taken an insurmountable prejudice, in consequence of some fancied resemblance he supposed him to bear to the miser's son. The former gentleman spent that night with him, and after a vast deal of exertion and difficulty, got him so far composed, as that he attempted to confess to him, which, however, he did only in a hurried and distracted manner.

But how shall we describe the scene, and we have it from more than one or two witnesses, which presented itself, when the hour of his execution drew nigh: His cries and shriekings were distinctly heard for a considerable distance among the dense multitudes which were assembled to witness his death; thus giving to that dreadful event a character of horror so deep and gloomy, that many persons finding themselves unable to bear it, withdrew from the crowd, and actually fainted on hearing the almost supernatural tones of his yells and howlings within.

In the meantime, the proceedings in the press-room were of a still more terrific description. He now resembled the stag at bay; his strength became more than human. On attempting to tie his hands, five men were found insufficient for the woeful task. He yelled, and flung them aside like children, but made no attempt to escape, for in truth, he knew not what he did. The sheriff, one of the most powerful and athletic men to be

found in a province, was turned about and bent like an osier in his hands. His words when the fury of despair permitted his wild and broken cries to become intelligible, were now for life—only life upon any terms; and again did he howl out his horror of death, hell, and judgment. Never was such a scene perhaps witnessed.

At length his hands were tied, and they attempted to get him up to the platform of death, but to their amazement he was once more loose, and flying to the priest, he clasped him with the grip of Hercules.

"Save me, save me," he shouted. "Let me live. I can't die. You're puttin' me into hell's fire. How can I face God? Ho, it's tarrible, it's tarrible, it's damnable! Life, life, life—only life, oh, only life!"

As he spoke he strained the reverend gentleman to his breast, and kissed him, and shouted with a wildness of entreaty which far transcended in terror the most outrageous paroxysms of insanity.

"I will not lave the priest," shrieked he; "so long as I stay with him I'll be so long out of the punishments of eternity—out of hell's fire! I will stick to you. Don't—don't put me away, but have pity on me. No, I'll not go, I'll not go."

Again he kissed the priest's lips, cheeks, and forehead, and still clung to him with fearful violence, until at last his hands were finally secured beyond the possibility of his again getting them loose. He then threw himself upon the ground, and still resisted, with a degree of muscular strength altogether unaccountable in a person even of his compact and rather athletic form. His appearance upon the platform will long be remembered by those who had the questionable gratification of witnessing it. It was the struggle of strong men dragging a strong man to the most frightful of all precipices—Death. When he was seen by the people in the act of being forced with such violence to the drop, they all moved, like a forest agitated by a sudden breeze, and uttered that strange murmur, composed of many passions

which can only be heard where a large number of persons are congregated together under the power of something that is deep and thrilling in its interest. At length after a struggle for life, and a horror of death possibly unprecedented in the annals of crime, he was pushed upon the drop, the spring was touched, and the unhappy man passed shrieking into that eternity which he dreaded so much. His death was instantaneous, and after hanging the usual time, his body was removed to the jail; the crowd began to disperse, and in half an hour the streets and people presented nothing more than their ordinary aspect of indifference to everything but their own affairs.*

Such and so light, after all, is the impression which death makes upon life, when the heart and domestic affections are not concerned.

* We have only to say that W—m C—k, Esq. of L—sb—e, sheriff of the county of D—n, and those who officially attended, about four years ago, the execution of a man named M———y, at the gaol of D—np—k, for a most heinous murder, will, should they happen to see this description, not hesitate to declare that it falls far short of what they themselves witnessed upon this "terrible" occasion. There is *nothing* mentioned *here* which did not *then occur*, but there is much omitted.

CHAPTER XX.

AND now, gentle and patient reader,—for well, indeed, has thy patience been tried, during the progress of this tantalizing narrative—we beg to assure thee, that unless thou art so exquisitely tender-hearted as to mourn over the fate of Bartle Flanagan, the shadows which darkened the morning and noon of our story have departed, and its eve will be dewy, and calm, and effulgent.

Flanagan's execution, like any other just and necessary vindication of the laws, was not without its usual good effect upon the great body of the people; for although we are not advocates for a sanguinary statute-book, neither are we the eulogists of those who, with sufficient power in their hands, sit calmly and serenely amidst scenes of outrage and crime, in which the innocent suffer by the impunity of the guilty. Fame, who is busy on such occasions, soon published to a far distance Flanagan's confession of having committed the crime for which O'Donovan was punished. John O'Brien had it himself from the sheriff's lips, as well as from a still more authentic statement written by the priest who attended him, and signed by the unhappy culprit's hand, in the presence of that gentleman, the governor of the jail, and two turnkeys. The sheriff now heard from O'Brien, for the first time, that O'Donovan's parents, having disposed of all their property, had followed him to New South Wales, a circumstance by which he was so much struck at the moment, that he observed to O'Brien:—

“Do you not think it the duty of government, considering all the young man and his parents have suffered by that rascal's malice, to bring the whole family back at its own expense? For my part, aware as I am of the excellent disposition of the Chief Secretary, I think if we ask them it will be done.”

"Our best plan, perhaps," replied John, "is to get a memorial to that effect signed by those who subscribed to the former one in his behalf. I think it is certainly necessary, for, to tell you the truth, I doubt whether they are in possession of funds sufficient for the expenses of so long a journey."

"I know," said the sheriff, "that there is little time to be lost, for S——," naming the governor of the jail, "tells me that the next convict ship sails in a fortnight. We must, therefore, push forward the business as rapidly as we can."

Well and truly did they keep their words, for we have the satisfaction of adding, that on the seventh day from the date of that conversation, they received a communication from the Castle, informing them that after having taken the peculiar hardships of O'Donovan's singular case into mature consideration, they deemed the prayer of the memorial such as they felt pleasure in complying with; and that the colonial secretary had been written to, to take the proper steps for the return of the young man and his parents to their own country at the expense of government.

This was enough, and almost more than O'Brien expected. He had now done as much as could be done for the present, and nothing remained but to await their arrival with hope and patience. In truth the prospect that now presented itself to the Bodagh's family was one in which, for the sake of the beloved Una, they felt a deep, and overwhelming interest. Ever since Connor's removal from the country her spirits had become gradually more and more depressed. All her mirth and gaiety had abandoned her; she disrelished reading; she avoided company; she hardly ever laughed, but on the contrary indulged in long fits of bitter grief while upon her solitary rambles. Her chief companion was Biddy Nulty, whom she exempted from her usual employment, whenever she wished that Connor should be the topic of their conversation. Many a time have they strolled together through

the garden, where Una has often stood, and pointing to the summer-house where the acknowledgments of their affection were first exchanged, said to her humble companion—

“Biddy, that is the spot where he first told me that he loved me, and where I first acknowledged my love to him.”

She would then pull out from her heart the locket which contained his rich brown hair, and after kissing it, sit and weep on the spot which was so dear to her.

Biddy’s task was to recount to the unhappy girl such anecdotes as she remembered of him; and as these were all to his advantage, we need scarcely say that many an entertainment of this kind she was called upon to furnish to her whose melancholy enjoyment was now only the remembrance of him, and what he had once been to her.

“I would have been in a convent long before now, Biddy,” said she, a few days before Flanagan’s trial, “but I will not leave my father and mother, because I know they could not live without me. My brother John has declined Maynooth, lest I should feel melancholy for want of some person to amuse me and to cheer me; and now I feel that it would be an ungrateful return I should make if I entered a convent, and left my parents without a daughter whom they love so well, and my brother without a sister on whom he doats.”

“Well, Miss,” replied Biddy, “don’t be cast down; for my part I’d always hope the best. Who knows, Miss, but a better life may be turned up yet? I’d hould a naggin that God nivr intinded an innocent creature like you to spind the rest of your life in sadness and sorrow, as you’re doin’. Always hope for the best.”

“Ah, Biddy,” she replied, “you don’t know what you speak of. *His* sentence is one that can never be changed; and as for hoping for the best, how can I do that Biddy, when I know that I have no ‘best’ to hope for. He was my *best* in this world; but he is gone.

Now go in, Biddy, and leave me to myself for a little. You know how I love to be alone,"

"May God in heaven pity you, Miss Oona!" exclaimed the poor girl, whilst the tears gushed from her eyes, "as I do this day! Oh, keep up your heart, Miss, darlin'; for while there's life there's hope."

Little did she then dream, however, that hope would be so soon restored to her heart, or that the revolution of another year should see her waiting with trembling delight for the fulness of her happiness.

On the evening previous to Bartle Flanagan's execution, she was pouring out tea for her father and mother, as was usual, when her brother John came home on his return from the assizes. Although the smile of affection with which she always received him lit up her dark glossy eyes, yet he observed that she appeared unusually depressed, and much more pale than she had been for some time past.

"Una, are you unwell, dear?" he asked, as she handed him a cup of tea.

She looked at him with a kind of affectionate reproof in her eyes, as if she wondered that he should be ignorant of the sorrow which preyed upon her.

"Not in health, John," she replied; "but that man's trial, and the many remembrances it has stirred up in my mind have disturbed me. I am very much cast down, as you may see. Indeed, to speak truth, and without disguise, I think my heart is broken. Every one knows that a breaking heart is incurable."

"You take it too much to yourself, *alanna dhas*," said her mother; "but you must keep up your spirits, darlin'—time will work wondhers."

"With me, mother, it never can."

"Una," said John, with affected gravity, "you have just made two assertions, which I can prove to be false."

She looked at him with surprise.

"False, dear John?"

"Yes false, dear Una; and I will prove it, as I said. In the first place, there *is* a cure for a breaking heart; and in the next place time *will* work wonders, even with you."

"Well," she said, assuming a look of sickly cheerfulness, "I should be very ungrateful, John, if I did not smile for you, even when you don't smile yourself, after all the ingenious plans you take to keep up my spirits."

"My dear girl," replied John, "I will not trifle with you; I ask you now to be firm, and say whether you are capable of hearing good news."

"Good news to me! I hope I am, John."

"Well, then, I have to inform you that this day Bartle Flanagan has confessed that it was *not* Connor O'Donovan who burned our haggard, but himself. The sheriff has writted to inform the government, so that we will have Connor back again with a name and character unsullied.

She looked at him for a moment, then at her parents; and her cheek still got paler, and after a slight pause she burst out into a vehement and irrepressible paroxysm of grief.

"John, is this true?" inquired his father.

"*Vic na hoiah!* John—blessed mother—thru?—but is it, John? is it?"

"Indeed it is, mother—the villain, now that he has no hope of his life, confessed it this day."

"God knows, darlin'," exclaimed the Bodagh's warm-hearted wife, now melting into tears herself, "it's no wondher you should cry tears of joy for this. God wouldn't be above us, *a cushla oge machree*, or he'd send brighter days before your young and innocent heart."

Una could not speak, but wept on; the grief she felt, however, became gradually milder in its character, until at length her violent sobbings were hushed; and although the tears still flowed, they flowed in silence.

"We will have him back, sartinly," said the Bodagh;

"don't cry, dear, we'll have him here agin with no desateful villin to swear away his life."

"I could die now," said the noble minded girl; "I think I could die now, without ever seeing him. His name is cleared and will be cleared; his character untainted; and that is dearer to me even than his love. Oh, I knew it; I knew it," she fervently exclaimed; "and when all the world was against him, I was for him; I and his own mother—for we were the two that knew his heart best."

"Well," said John, smiling, "if I brought you gloomy news once, I believe I brought you pleasant news twice. You remember when I told you he was not to die."

"Indeed, John dear, you are the best brother that ever God blessed a sister with; but I hope this is not a dream. Oh, can it be possible? and when I awake in the morning will it be to the sorrowful heart I had yesterday! I am bewildered. After this who should ever despair in the goodness of God, or think that the trials he sends but for a time are to last always?"

"Bridget," said the gracious Bodagh, "we must have a glass of punch; an' upon my reputaytion, Oona, we'll drink to his speedy return."

"Troth, an' Oona *will* take a glass herself, this night," added her mother; "an' thanks be to Goodness, she'll be our *cooleen dhas dhun* agin—won't you have a glass, asthore machree?"

"I'll do any thing that any of you wishes me, mother," replied Una.

She gave, as she uttered the words, a slight sob, which turned their attention once more to her; but they saw at once, by the brilliant sparkle of her eyes, that it was occasioned by the unexpected influx of delight and happiness which were accumulating round her heart.

"Mother," she said, "will *you* make the punch for them, to-night? I cannot rest till I let poor Biddy

Nulty know what has happened. Cleared!" she added exultingly, "his name and character cleared!"

The beautiful girl then left the room, and short as was the space which elapsed since she heard her brother's communication, they could not help being struck at the light elastic step with which she tripped out of it. Brief, however, as the period was, she had time to cast aside the burthen of care which had pressed her down, and so grievously changed her easy pace to the slow tread of sorrow.

"God help our poor colleen dhas," exclaimed her mother, "but she's the happy crature, this night."

"And happy must the hearth be where her light will shine," replied her father, quoting a beautiful Irish proverb to that effect.

"The ways of providence are beautiful when seen aright or understood," said her brother; "she was too good to be punished overmuch, but not too perfect to be tried. Their calamitous separation will enhance the value of their affection for each other when they meet; for pure and exalted as her love for Connor is, yet I am proud to say that Connor is worthy of her and it."

That night her mother observed that Una spent a longer time than usual at her devotions, and on looking into her room when passing, she saw her on her knees, and heard her again sobbing with the grateful sense of a delighted heart. She did not again address her, and they all retired to happier slumbers than they had enjoyed for many a night.

Our readers have already had proofs of Una's consideration, generosity, and uncommon delicacy. Her conduct at the approach of her lover's trial, and again when he was about to leave her and his country forever, they cannot, we are sure, have forgotten. When her brother had shown the official communication from the Castle, in which government expressed its intention of bringing Connor and his parents home at its own expense, the Bodagh and his wife, knowing that the

intended husband of their daughter possessed no means of supporting her, declared, in order to remove any shade of anxiety from her mind, that O'Donovan, after their marriage, should live with themselves, for they did not wish, they said, that Una should be separated from them. This was highly gratifying to her, but beyond her lover's welfare, whether from want of thought or otherwise, it is not easy to say, she saw that their sympathy did not extend. This troubled her, for she knew how Connor loved his parents, and how much any want of comfort they might feel would distress him. She accordingly consulted with her ever-faithful confidant, John, and begged of him to provide for them at her own expense a comfortable dwelling, and to furnish it as near as might be practicable to the manner in which their former one had been furnished. She also desired him to say nothing to their parents about this, "for I intend," she added, "to have a little surprise for them all."

About the time, therefore, when the vessel in which they were to arrive was expected, a snug, well furnished house, convenient to the Bodagh's, amply stored with provisions, and kept by a daughter of Nogher M'Cor-mick's, awaited them. Nothing that could render them easy was omitted, and many things also were procured in the shape of additional comforts to which they had not been accustomed before.

At length the arrival of the much-wished for vessel was announced, and John O'Brien, after having agreed to let Una know by letter where the Bodagh's car should meet them, mounted the day coach, and proceeded to welcome home his future brother-in-law, prepared at the same time, to render both to him and his parents whatever assistance they stood in need of, either pecuniary or otherwise, after so long and so trying a voyage.

The meeting of two such kindred spirits may be easily conceived. There were few words wasted between them, but they were full of truth and sincerity.

"My noble fellow," said O'Brien, clasping Connor's hand, "she is at home with a beating heart and a happy one, waiting for you."

"John," replied the other fervently, "the wealth of the universe is below her price. I'm not worthy of her, except in this, that I could shed my heart's dearest blood to do her good."

"Little you know of it yet," said the other, smiling significantly, "but you will soon."

It appeared that Fardoroughia's wife had borne the hardships of both voyages better than her husband, who, as his son sensibly observed, had been too much worn down before by the struggle between his love for him and his attachment to his money.

"His care is now nearly over," said Connor, with a sigh. "Indeed he is so far gone that I don't know how to lave him, while I'm providin' a home for him to die in."

"That is already done," replied O'Brien; "Una did not forget it. They have a house near ours, furnished with every thing that can contribute to their comfort."

Connor, on hearing this, paused, and his cheek became pale and red alternately with emotion—his nerves thrilled, and a charm of love and pleasure diffused itself over his whole being.

"There is no use in speaking," he exclaimed; "love her more than I do I cannot."

In consequence of Fardoroughia's illness they were forced to travel by slower and shorter stages than they intended. O'Brien, however, never left them; for he knew that should the miser die on the way, they would require the presence and services of a friend. In due time, however, they reached the place appointed by John for the car to meet them; and ere many hours had passed, they found themselves once more in what they could call their own home. From the miser's mind the power of observing external nature seemed to have been altogether withdrawn; he made no observation whatever upon the

appearance and novelty of the scene to which he was conveyed, nor of the country through which he passed ; but when put to bed he covered himself with the bed-clothes, and soon fell into a slumber.

“Connor,” said his mother, “your father’s now asleep, an’ won’t miss you ; lose no time, thin, in goin’ to see *her* ; an’ may God strinthen you both for sich a meetin’ !”

He and O’Brien accordingly went.

The Bodagh was out, but Una and her mother were sitting in the parlour, when the noise of a jaunting-car was heard driving up to the door ; Una involuntarily looked out of the window, and seeing two persons she started up, and putting her hands together, hysterically exclaimed, “Oh, mother, dear mother, assist me, assist me—he’s here.” Her mother caught her in her arms ; and at the same moment Connor rushed in. Una could only extend her arms to receive him ; he clasped her to his heart, and she sobbed several times rapidly, and then her head sank upon his bosom.

Her mother and brother were both weeping.

Her lover looked down upon her, and as he hung over the beautiful and insensible girl, the tears which he shed copiously bedewed her face. After a few minutes she recovered, and her brother, with his usual delicacy, beckoned to his mother to follow him out of the room, knowing that the presence of a third person is always a restraint upon the interchange of even the tenderest and purest affection. Both, therefore, were then left together ; and we, in like manner, must allow that delicious interview to be sacred only to themselves, and unprofaned by the gaze and presence of a spectator.

The Bodagh and Mrs. O’Brien were highly gratified at the steps their children had taken to provide for the comfort of Fardorougha and his wife. The next day the whole family paid them a visit, but on seeing the Miser, it was clear that his days were numbered. During the most vigorous and healthy period of his life, he had

always been thin and emaciated ; but now when age, illness, the severity of a six months' voyage, and, last of all, the hand of death, left their wasting traces upon his person, it would indeed be difficult to witness any image of penury more significant of its spirit. We must, however, do the old man justice. Since the loss of his money, or rather since the trial and conviction of his son, or probably since the operation of both events upon his heart, he had seldom, if ever, by a single act or expression, afforded any proof that his avarice survived, or was able to maintain its hold upon him, against the shock which awakened the full power of a father's love.

About ten o'clock, A.M., on the fourth day after their arrival, Connor, who had run over to the Bodagh's, was hurriedly sent for by his mother, who desired Nelly M'Cormick to say that his father incessantly called for him, and that he must not loose a moment in coming. He turned immediately with her, and found the old man reclining in bed, supported by his wife, who sat behind him.

"Is my boy comin'?" he said, in a thin, wiry, worn voice, but in words which, to any person near him, were as distinct almost as ever:—"is my boy Connor comin'?"

"I am here, father," replied Connor, who had just entered the room; "sure I am always with you."

"You are, you are," said he; "you were ever an' always good. Give me your hand, Connor."

Connor did so.

"Connor darlin'," he proceeded, "don't be like me; I loved money too much; I set my heart on it, an' you know how it was taken away from me. The priest yestherday laid it upon me, out of regard to my reignin' sin, as he called it, to advise you, afore I'd die, aginst lovin' the wealth o' this world too much."

"I hope I never will, father. Your own misfortune ought to be a warnin' to me."

"Ay, you may say that; it's I indeed that was misfortunate; but it was all through P——, an' that nest o' robbers, the Isle o' man."

"Don't think of him or it now, my dear father—don't be discomposin' your mind about them."

"He was a villin—a deep villin; but that's not the thing. Your mother was spakin' to the priest about masses for my sowl. Now, Connor, I know that they'll say them for nothin' when they think the person's poor. I know that, for I remember doin' Father Fogarty myself out of two-an'-sixpence a mass that I got to give him, by pladin' poverty; it was for my own father's sowl, an' I saved the price of a pair o' shoes by it, and had the masses sed still. That was workin' him the right way."

Connor and his mother exchanged a melancholy glance, and the latter, who, on witnessing his frame of mind, could not help shedding bitter tears, said to him—

"Fardorougha dear, Fardorougha, asthore macree, won't you be guided by me? You're now on your death-bed, an' think of God's marcy—it's *that* you stand most in need of. Sure, avourneen, if you had all the money you ever had, you couldn't bring a penny of it where you're goin'."

"Well, but I'm givin' Connor an advice that'll sarve him. Sure I'm not biddin' him to set his heart on it, for I tould the priest I wouldn't; but is that any *raison* why he'd not *save* it? I didn't tell the priest that I wouldn't bid him do *that*."

"Father," said Connor, "for the love of God put these thoughts out of your head and heart."

"So, Connor dear," proceeded the old man, not attending to him, "in makin' a bargain wid any one bate them down, or they'll *do* you, an' in makin' any bargain Connor, be sure to make as *hard* a one as you can; but for all that be honest, and never lend a penny o' money widout intherest and good security."

"I think he's wanderin', whispered his mother."
"Oh, grant it may be so, marcifful Jasus, this day."

"Honor, ahagur."

"Well, darlin', what is it?"

"There's another thing that troubles me—I never knew what it was to feel myself far from my own till now."

"How is that, dear?"

"My bones won't rest in my own country; I won't sleep wid them that belong to me. How will I lie in a strange grave an' in a far land? Oh, will no one bring me back to my own?"

The untutored sympathies of neither wife nor son could resist this beautiful and affecting trait of nature, and the undying love of one's own land, emanating as it did, so unexpectedly, from a heart otherwise insensible to the ordinary tendernesses of life.

"Sure you are at home, avourneen," said Honor: "an' will rest wid your friends and relations that have gone before you."

"No," said he, "I'm not: I'm far away from them; but now I feel more comforted; I have *one* wid me that's dearer than them all. Connor and I will sleep together; won't we, Connor!"

This affectionate transition from every other earthly object to himself, so powerfully smote the son's heart, that he could not reply.

"What ails him, Connor;" said his wife. "Help me to keep up his head—Saver above!"

Connor raised his head, but saw at a glance that the last struggle in the old man's heart was over. The miser was no more.

Little now remains to be said. The grief for old age, though natural, is never abiding. The miser *did* sleep with his own; and after a decent period allotted to his memory, need we say that our hero and heroine, if we may be permitted so to dignify them, were crowned in the enjoyment of those affections which were so severely tested, and at the same time so worthy of their sweet reward.

Ned M'Cormick and Biddy Nulty followed their example, and occupied the house formerly allotted to Fardorougha and his wife. John O'Brien afterwards

married, and the Bodagh, prudently reserving a competent farm for himself, equally divided his large holdings between his son and son-in-law. On John's Moiety he built a suitable house; but Una and her husband, and Honor, all live with themselves, and we need scarcely say, for it is not long since we spent a week with them, that the affection of the old people for their grand-children is quite enthusiastic, and that the grand-children, both boys and girls, are worthy of it.

THE END.

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